

Reli(e)ving the Past: Emotion Work in the Holocaust's Second Generation

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Although most studies of the Second Generation typically account for their social psychological orientations by relying on psychiatric and psychological models, I propose an alternative "listening" to this cohort. I analyze in-depth interviews by adopting Hochschild's insights on emotion work as a sensitizing framework and suggest that (1) four interrelated types of "deep acting" they continuously feel compelled to perform can account for the psychological "symptoms" commonly attributed to them and (2) these types of deep acting constitute adjustments and reactions to problematic emotional dynamics characterizing their survivor families. I conclude with a discussion of the reciprocal effects of this emotion work.

When I go to work in the morning and see so many cars and exhaust fumes, I tell myself, don't breathe! I remember that this is how they would gas people—redirect exhaust pipes back into the trucks full of prisoners. . . . Too many exhaust fumes and I think about the camps. There is not one day that I don't think about those things. They cross my mind twenty times a day, *a hundred times a day!*

—Michelle, a Second Generation informant

Over the past four decades, researchers studying traumatizing events such as war, terrorism, interpersonal violence, and "natural" catastrophes have attempted to understand both their direct psychological effects on the victims themselves and, increasingly, their indirect effects on the victims' offspring (Abrams 1999; Baranowsky et al. 1998; Bergmann and Jacovy 1982; Danieli 1998; Wilson, Harel, and Kahana 1988). Chief among the works that study the transgenerational transmission of trauma are those concerning the children of Nazi Holocaust survivors—a cohort called the "Second Generation." Although one cannot speak of a recognizable Second Generation "syndrome," research conducted in the United States, Canada, Israel, and elsewhere suggests that members of this cohort display particular orientations differing from those found among their peers (Aleksandrowicz 1973; Berger 1997; Davidson 1980; Fogelman and Savran 1980; Glassman 1999; Goldhar 1999;

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Hass 1990, 1995; Klein 1973; Klein-Parker 1988; Prince 1985a, 1985b; Rubenstein, Cutter, and Templer 1989; Sigal and Weinfeld 1989; Wardi 1992).

What are these orientations, and how can we explain them? Researchers have traditionally relied on a variety of psychological and psychiatric models, theories and concepts. My purpose here is to listen to them anew by using Hochschild's (1983, 1989a, 1989b, 1990) theoretical insights on emotion management as a sensitizing framework.

Researchers who have detected common psychological orientations among Second Generation members have suggested that although not directly traumatized by the Holocaust, they had nevertheless been socialized in a certain psychological "milieu" that they internalized (Sigal and Weinfeld 1989). Accordingly, some of the dispositions observed among members of this cohort parallel those displayed by their survivor-parents (Davidson 1980; Fogelman and Savran 1980; Prince 1985a, 1985b; Zajde 1993; but see Sigal and Weinfeld 1985, 1989). Known as the "survivor syndrome" (Barocas and Barocas 1979; Eitinger 1964; Lifton 1988; Niederland 1964), these dispositions include "chronic anxiety, fear of renewed persecution, recurring nightmares, psychosomatic disorders, anhedonia, social withdrawal, fatigue, hypochondria, inability to concentrate, profound alteration of personal identity, depression, guilt, and psychic numbing" (Hass 1990:8-9).

In contrast, other research (Aleksandrowicz 1973; Auherhan and Laub 1998; Berger 1997; Davidson 1980; Hass 1995; Solomon 1998; Zajde 1993) suggests that the orientations Second Generation members display may also constitute *indirect* consequences of their parents' trauma. According to this view, survivors might have nurtured problematic orientations in their children not only because they directly transmitted the survivor syndrome to them but also because the traumatic experiences they endured during the war impaired their parenting skills and, hence, led to problematic socialization practices (Felsen 1988; Kellerman 1999; Klein-Parker 1988; Sigal and Weinfeld 1985, 1989). Therefore, Second Generation members have not only *internalized* the specific psychological orientations their parents displayed as a result of the Holocaust trauma but also tried to *adjust to* the problematic socialization practices their parents developed as a result of this trauma. I focus on this adjustment in this article.

THE SECOND GENERATION: LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the Second Generation literature¹ reveals that many of the researchers approach their subjects from psychological and psychiatric perspectives. As a result, this literature, although informative, suffers from several shortcomings. Beyond its reductionist tendencies, it reveals, for example, reluctance to study the effects of the transgenerational transmission of trauma *beyond* the immediate family cell and often extracts respondents and their families from the broader social-historical context in which they live. With rare exceptions (e.g., Lentin 2000), it fails to address the extent to which macro-social transformations could affect this transgenerational

transmission of trauma. In addition, this literature neglects the spatial contexts in which survivors and their children live, or the possible significance of ethnic-religious affiliation on the transmission process and its consequences.² Finally, although existing interviews with Second Generation members are saturated with concepts connoting emotions, to my knowledge no research applies the insights advanced by sociologists of emotions to this cohort.

The study of the transgenerational transmission of the Holocaust trauma is also replete with difficulties. At the micro-level, for example, multilayered communication patterns between survivors and their children are difficult to fully grasp, as these are often nonverbal, change over time as survivors and their children age, and generate different reactions in the offspring once they become parents themselves. The psychological tendencies characterizing survivors *before* the war are important yet difficult to ascertain because the traumas incurred during the Holocaust could have generated an entirely new set of psychological tendencies among different individuals, exacerbated already existing ones, or extinguished still others that were present before the war (Hass 1990, 1995).

At the macro-level, many researchers typically have approached Holocaust survivors as an undifferentiated group. However, others (e.g., Danieli 1981) have pointed out significant differences within this population. These variables include survivors' class membership, age, and familial situation before and during the war, war experiences, social class, and type of marriage after the war. These influence the various and changing ways that survivors have adapted to their traumas and transmitted them to the next generation (see also Berger 1995).³

Taking all these and a host of other sociological variables into consideration, it becomes almost impossible to precisely understand what kinds of parents, having experienced what kinds of trauma, at what age, and in which context, will transmit what kinds of message, in what ways, to what kinds of children, and with what consequences. Yet, in spite of these variations, researchers still report similar psychological tendencies in the Second Generation (Hass 1990, 1995; Kellerman 1999; Solomon 1998).

THEORETICAL APPROACH

Hochschild's work on "emotion management" (1983, 1989a, 1989b, 1990) provides an intriguing starting point for analyzing my interviews with Second Generation members. In her groundbreaking study of flight attendants and bill collectors, Hochschild (1983:7) introduced the concept of emotional labor as labor that "requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others." Refining this concept further, she distinguishes between emotional *labor* that individuals performed in the marketplace and under capitalist relations of production and emotion *work* that they performed in the private realm. In addition, Hochschild differentiates "surface acting" from "deep acting." Although both terms refer to the work we perform to

bring emotions in line with “feeling rules,” the former designates our attempts “to change how we outwardly appear,” and the latter refers to a display that “is a natural result of working on feelings” (p. 35). Hence, surface acting entails acting and *impression* management—displaying emotional “face” and demeanor appropriate to the feeling rules of the particular context in which we find ourselves. Deep acting, in contrast, entails transforming one’s emotions—marshaling appropriate emotions and suppressing inappropriate ones. In both cases, therefore, we bring our emotions in line with emotion norms (beliefs about proper emotions) and display rules (prescriptions for the proper display of emotions).

Hochschild’s *Managed Heart* focuses on the emotional labor individuals perform *as workers*; however, I concentrate here on emotion work individuals perform *as family members*. As she suggests (1983:69), although the family is often considered a “relief zone away from the pressures of work . . . it quietly imposes emotional obligations of its own”:

Parents and children, husbands and wives, lovers and best friends expect to have more freedom from feeling rules and less need for emotion work; in reality, however, the subterranean work of placing an acceptable inner face on ambivalence is all the more crucial for them. In fact, the deeper the bond, the more emotional work, the more unconscious we are of it. In the most personal bonds, then, emotion work is likely to be the strongest. (P. 68)

Bringing Hochschild’s insights on emotion management into the private realm of Holocaust families reveals interesting patterns, because, as the existing literature suggests, the emotional dynamics characterizing these families seem significantly different from those found in nonsurvivor families on at least four points. One difference concretizes Gordon’s (1990:161) remark that “a person’s position in a social structure (class, gender, generational membership, etc.) determines the *type and frequency* of emotions that will be directed to . . . or aroused in him or her.” As we will see, survivors often encouraged their children to experience and display undesirable emotions (sadness, mourning, anxiety, emotional numbing) and discouraged them from experiencing and displaying desirable ones (joy, happiness, trust, confidence).

A second difference is the *timing* at which their parents required members of the Second Generation to perform this emotion work and the subsequent disruption of what is considered a normal *sequence* in the socialization of emotions (see Gordon 1990:162–63, 1989). Parents induced Second Generation members not only to perform taxing emotional work but also to do so prematurely. Lacking the emotional tools necessary to accomplish this work, they often harbored the nagging feeling that the emotional task at hand was both Herculean in the sheer effort involved and Sisyphean in its potential resolution.

A third salient difference is the *directionality* of the emotional relationships of parents and children. As Hochschild (1983:74) remarks, “a social role . . . is partly a way of describing what feelings people think are owed and are owing,” and we indeed usually expect parents to attend to their children’s emotional needs, to offer them protective arms, emotional support, sympathy, and guidance, but also to educate them

in age-appropriate role-playing and to ensure them unconditional acceptance—at least during their formative years. Yet studies conducted in various countries have frequently detected role reversals in survivor families. In these cases, parents often induce their children to parent them, to protect them and their emotional well-being, to calm their fears and anxieties, to intervene on their behalf in the public sphere, to guide them in everyday decision making, and to validate them (see, e.g., Kestenberg 1982; Rosenman 1984). These children are thus delegated, early on, enormous emotional power over their parents—a power they neither necessarily desire nor know how to manage or avoid.⁴ Thus, in comparison to Hochschild's *Second Shift* couples who can, as adults, negotiate or enforce particular divisions of emotional labor, Second Generation members often feel that the type of emotion work they were induced to perform for and by their parents was wholly inappropriate as it reversed the social roles typically expected of parents and children.

Such parents either implicitly (and often unconsciously) requested emotion work through what Danieli (1981) and others call “a conspiracy of silence” or explicitly enforced and justified it on the grounds of Holocaust trauma and past suffering (see Fogelman and Savran 1980; Hass 1995; Klein-Parker 1988; Solomon 1998). For example, while survivors can and do secure help, advice, obedience, or sympathy from their children consciously and verbally, they can also obtain these bonds of support by unconsciously adopting a helpless and childlike attitude, which then prompts their children to respond accordingly. As several respondents have indicated, the most extreme and dramatic examples of such unconscious requests take the form of sudden depressive (and sometimes psychotic) breakdowns as well as a host of worrisome psychosomatic symptoms, which would strike parents at the precise moment when their children would decide to leave home—either temporarily or permanently.

A fourth important difference between survivor and nonsurvivor families pertains to the *intensity* of emotional relations between survivors and their offspring—an intensity that Klein-Parker (1988) and Rosenberger (1973) suggest is often extreme. Parents are either emotionless or overdramatic. They are either psychologically and emotionally removed from their children or emotionally overinvolved in their children's lives. They are either hypercritical of their children or altercast them as “messiahs” (Finkelkraut 1980), “redeeming angels,” miraculous offspring whose mission is to compensate them for their traumas and losses. They either stubbornly refuse to discuss their Holocaust experiences with their children or cannot refrain from mentioning them in a variety of contexts. They often appear to their children as either persecutors or victims. Although no absolute one-to-one correspondence exists between these four characteristics and the four types of deep acting analyzed below, the latter might constitute a reaction or adjustment to the former.

METHODS AND DATA

I conducted the present study while on sabbatical leave in Brussels during the fall 2000–spring 2001 academic year. Born and raised in Brussels, I had been an active

participant in the Jewish community there and was quite familiar with the continuous and visible presence of the Holocaust in its collective memory and everyday life and practices. Besides having biographical knowledge of this community and its culture, I wanted to fill a gap in the literature. Most researchers on the Second Generation conduct their studies in the United States, Israel, Canada, or other places far removed from the locus of the parents' trauma. To my knowledge no one discusses the importance of geographic proximity to the locus of past trauma on the transmission process. My desire to explore this question led me to conduct research in Belgium.

Once in Brussels, I contacted the local Jewish Community Mental Health Center to discuss my research interests with its director and staff members. To my pleasant surprise, the director, a sociologist, was a childhood friend with whom I had attended high school and participated in Socialist-Zionist youth movements. He indicated that no one had yet conducted a study on the Second Generation in Belgium, and he encouraged me to pursue this topic. He provided me with an office, a telephone, secretarial support, and access to some institutional files and various potentially interested audiences. More specifically, he organized three events to publicize my research and recruit participants. The first—a "live" interview we conducted at the local Jewish radio station—generated a very small number of people willing to be interviewed. The second—an article I published in the community newsletter in which I explained my research project—produced more responses. The third—a lecture I delivered at the Community Mental Health Center—resulted in an impressive volume of audience members' sign-ups, phone calls, and e-mails. Once I started interviewing volunteers, many discussed my research with their friends and relatives, who would then contact me and volunteer as well. I had two criteria for selection: to have been born after World War II and to have parents who endured the Holocaust by either hiding, passing as Gentile, fighting in various resistance movements, or surviving labor, concentration, or extermination camps. This self-selected and snowball sample generated forty informants. The youngest was twenty-nine, the oldest fifty-four. Twenty-five were women, and fifteen were men. Many had a university education, and among them, a few worked in professions they either disliked or thought were beneath their intellectual capacities. Most were single, divorced, remarried, or separated. Most also had noticeably ambiguous definitions of their Jewish identity. Only one was religious, and several grew up in families they described as communist and atheistic. Close to 95 percent of them were or had been seeing a therapist.

Typically, I telephoned an informant and negotiated a time and place where we could conduct the interview. Depending on the informants' preference, we met at my Community Mental Health Center office, their homes, or public places such as cafés, bars, malls, or parks. Interviews lasted a minimum of three hours, sometimes six, and I interviewed twelve informants on numerous occasions.

As a warm-up stage, I usually started the interview by thanking the informant for agreeing to help me in my project and by providing a few general ideas about my

research interest. I also insisted that I was not a therapist and could provide neither answers nor solutions to the problems we might discuss. Rather, I suggested, the current interview was a mutually informing conversation. In exchange for the personal stories they shared with me, I offered tentative sociological interpretations and insights about them. I thus tried to establish a partnership, an equalitarian dialogue, a safe context in which “private troubles” met “public issues.” I also promised informants that their answers would remain anonymous and that they should feel free to refuse to answer questions they found problematic, to criticize those they considered irrelevant or inappropriate, and to suggest questions they thought I should have asked but had not. I also asked them if I could tape record the interview—a request that most granted.

When the interview got under way, I asked informants for basic demographic information (age, profession, marital status, education, religiosity) about themselves and then about their parents. After informants located both themselves and their parents in terms of these demographic variables, I asked about their parents’ experiences during the war. The responses to this varied considerably: some could provide an enormous amount of details, some knew practically nothing about it, and, more interestingly, some remembered much about it throughout the interview process. I would then ask whether informants thought their parents’ experiences had affected them in any way, and if so, how. This last question became the launching point (or, as some informants called, it “a door”) to the more unstructured part of the interview, which typically unfolded into extended and sometimes emotionally trying conversations about this transmission and its consequences.

I concluded the interviews by ensuring as much as possible that the informants were not feeling too sad or upset, by offering comforting words, and by thanking them. To provide a sense of continuity and care, I also asked if I could call to elucidate questions that might emerge during my analysis. Moreover, I insisted that they should feel free to call me and share more information or insights that might have surfaced after the interview.

Most informants indicated that my research topic held a great deal of significance for them. They talked of struggling with many of these issues “since birth,” and of feeling uncomfortable discussing them with either close family members or therapists. Many informants thanked me for initiating what they considered “important work,” and many also called their friends and relatives to encourage them to be interviewed as well. As the number of volunteers increased well beyond what I had originally anticipated and as many informants were more than eager to be interviewed on several occasions, I must assume that the interview was a positive experience for most.

Of course, not all informants were similarly enthusiastic or impressed. Although he changed his mind throughout the research, Ben, a sociologist, initially believed that a sociological approach was wholly inappropriate for this topic. Mike continuously criticized my efforts to understand anything about my topic rationally and often

condescendingly dismissed my questions—although he could also be endearingly friendly in casual conversation that took place as soon as I turned off the tape recorder. On a more difficult level, Nathalie remarked that I seemed too emotionally distant from the topics under discussion, and the manager of the Community Mental Health Center suggested I might want to get therapy myself, as what I was searching for would be quite unsettling.

I must also acknowledge that the people I interviewed shared a common willingness to engage in self-reflection and discuss their experiences with me. Because many members of the Second Generation insist that their parents' past had absolutely no effects on their lives and because many others simply refused to talk about it, questions of representativeness remain unresolved.

Although I was initially interested in exploring the importance of the spatial proximity to the locus of trauma on the transmission process, once the interviews started, it became clear that this question did not generate much interest among my informants. Throughout my frequent transcriptions and analyses of the interviews, I began to notice recurring terms such as "inertia," "paralysis," "exhaustion," "struggle," "forcing," "mission," "self-sacrifice," "feeling crushed," "burdened," and "invaded." I focused on these initial themes in successive interviews with some of my most eloquent informants (as well as new ones) and explored them in greater depth—a process that culminated in the present analysis. In addition, and these "data" are difficult to demonstrate, most of my informants also seemed and sounded rather sad and low-key and appeared to suffer from palpable pain. Although most were cooperative and friendly, few of them ever laughed, joked, smiled, or displayed an optimistic outlook on the present or the future. During the interviews, several could barely contain their pain, and a few would sometimes start sobbing—a situation I often found difficult to respond to. Of course, these emotions might very well have been induced by the very topic of the interview, but as most informants were also in therapy—many for depressive and anxious conditions—I believe that these emotional reactions were not unusual.

Following the self-reflexive turn in qualitative research, a few words about my own personal investment in this project seem warranted. Throughout my entire research, I felt torn between being at once both a member of this generation and a researcher somewhat distant from it. Although, like most of my informants, I was born and raised in a Holocaust psychological "milieu," I believe that two important differences between my informants and myself shaped the research process and my position as a researcher. First, I left this milieu when I was fifteen, moved to Israel, where I lived for about seven years, and then moved to the United States, where I have been living for the past twenty years. Early migration and the significantly different experiences with Jewish history, subjectivities, and identity in those three very dissimilar societies helped me to recast the Holocaust in a different light than most of my informants, who have never left this milieu, the historical lessons it teaches, and its constructions/constrictions of Jewish identity. I also believe that early migration allowed me some respite from the Holocaust as well as the opportunity to

relegate, if only for a while, this generational subjectivity to the periphery of everyday consciousness. Hence, my biographical familiarity with—and emic knowledge of—the consequences of the Holocaust in my generation enabled me to approach my informants with a significant stock of shared and tacit knowledge. At the same time, my geographic distance from the Holocaust and its sinister shadow that still hangs over Europe, granted me a comfortable mental and emotional distance from its psychological effects, allowing me to now revisit it from a more etic, sociological perspective—or so it seemed.

Second, my parents' experiences during World War II differed from many of the parents of my informants. While my father joined the British army and fought the Germans in North Africa, my mother fled to the Bastogne area with her parents and siblings, passed as a Gentile peasant, and joined the local armed resistance. Although these details may seem trivial, they hold importance for both sociological reasons and this research. As Danieli (1981, 1982, 1985) and Kav Venaki, Adler, and Gershoni (1985) suggest, parents' war experiences influenced their general worldview, hence the transmission process, and hence their children's emotional well-being. These researchers also discovered that survivors who actively fought typically fared better than those who hid, those who as children were entrusted to unfamiliar surroundings, or those who survived extreme conditions in labor, concentration, or extermination camps. Therefore, I felt somewhat "privileged" in comparison to most of my respondents. Each of my parents had taken an active and defiant stand during the war, and never got caught. As I realized throughout the research process, such a feeling indeed influenced my role as a researcher, framed my interactions with informants, prompted me to propose alternative interpretations of the transmission process to them, and, undoubtedly, informed the present analysis. Finally, I must admit that my engagement with the topic of the Second Generation is, in some ways, also an engagement with the self; and as the literature suggests, this is not unusual. Scholars of the Second Generation often belong to that generation and engage this topic at roughly similar points in their individual biographies.

At the end of my stay in Brussels, I presented my findings and interpretations to Holocaust survivors and their offspring. As their reactions, questions, and comments revealed, my "sociology of emotion" approach resonated better with their family experiences than did the many psychological and psychiatric ones they had heard so frequently in the past.

DEEP ACTING IN THE SECOND GENERATION

Approaching these interviews with Hochschild's emotion management model, I concentrate here on four types of deep acting that Second Generation members evoke, discuss their interrelatedness, and suggest that they constitute adjustments or reactions to the four significant differences in the emotional dynamics characterizing survivors' families that I reviewed above.

Suppressing and Producing (In)Congruent Emotions

The central and perhaps most unusual category of deep acting that Second Generation members feel they must perform results from the *types* and *frequency* of emotional experiences their parents displayed and encouraged their children to produce, as well as those their parents suppressed in themselves and discouraged in their children. We typically expect parents to socialize their children to produce positive emotions and to repress negative ones. However, respondents often mentioned they also had to produce negative emotions and repress positive ones. This first category of deep acting thus encompasses (a) the *suppression of negative emotions against their parents* (such as anger and resentment) they *do* experience but *should not* and (b) the *production of positive emotions toward their parents* (such as forgiveness and tenderness) they *do not* necessarily experience but *should* but also (c) the *suppression of positive emotions* (such as pleasure and joy in their own lives) they *want* to experience but *should not* and (d) the *production of negative emotions* (such as sadness and mourning) they *do not want* to experience but *should*. While the first (and other-directed) two tasks seem common enough in everyday socialization, the latter (and inner-directed) two are most unusual and warrant special attention.

One striking theme exemplified the Second Generation members' felt necessity to suppress positive emotions that they wanted to experience but felt they should not: their frequent reports of having to suppress pleasure. Here, therefore, the parents negatively charged an emotion conventionally deemed positive and desirable. Many of my respondents continue to perceive it as an emotion that must remain forever out of reach, and many admit having difficulties experiencing it. Ann, a forty-year-old psychiatric social worker, for example, described her mother as "destroying joy, the life that is within her but also within me, my sister, and others. It is like she cannot accept to see those signs of life such as pleasure and sexuality in others. She suffers from an absence of the desire to live."

Noah mentioned, "[I find it difficult to] let myself experience joy." Ben, a fiftyish sociologist and teacher at a community college, felt he betrayed his parents if he was too happy and felt a sort of culpability when he was too satisfied with himself. As he put it, "I seek after pleasure, but I only authorize it to myself up to a certain point; I can never experience pure pleasure." Nathalie, a thirtyish woman who worked as a secretary, confided, "By the time I reached adolescence, I had lost all taste for life, I was disgusted by people in general and felt like a zombie, like *a living dead*." Michelle, a graphic designer in her early forties, said:

The silent injunction not to allow oneself success, pleasure, happiness, inner peace, serenity, well-being, *life* in a certain way. . . . It *invades me*, it disturbs me, my life. The message my parents implicitly transmitted is that you *don't have the right* to live, you can survive but not live. You don't have the right. You have a debt toward the dead, and you can only get rid of it by paying with your own person, one way or another. It also means that your life does not belong to you. . . . You don't have the right to be satisfied. To be satisfied with oneself is an insult to those who died and who were not there to enjoy things, so you cannot enjoy

them either. You cannot be content, you cannot be happy, you cannot be. . . . From the moment this presupposition is there, regardless of what you do, it will never be enough, it will never be good. You *cannot* be relieved, you *cannot* be at peace, you *cannot* be satisfied.

Although informants felt they must suppress the positive emotions they yearned to experience, they paradoxically found themselves having to produce negative emotions they would rather avoid. As Ben explained:

I feel I have to take the world suffering upon myself and *hurt* because of it, but at the same time, I cannot *resist* doing it. My parents, I never saw them happy, and I cannot be happy either. They were always sad, and so I felt I had to respect this sadness, *internalize* it. They also transmitted the idea that we don't have the right to live well and be happy because all the dead behind us. . . . So, it's a sort of *unconscious violence one directs at oneself*.

More concretely, many informants often felt they must experience constant mourning for their parents' losses and suffering as well as for the family members who died in the war (Fogelman and Savran 1980). Because these relatives have never been physically present in their lives but exist only as stories, letters, photographs, names on monuments and graves, such enforced mourning is all the more onerous. To complicate matters, Second Generation members often had to compete with these (often idealized) "ghosts"⁵ for parental attention. But because such a competitive approach is unacceptable, they also had to deny it, or if acknowledged, silence and control it.

With rare exceptions, informants indicated that they could not allow themselves to harbor or express the negative emotions (resentment, anger, or hostility) they experienced toward their parents "because they've already suffered enough," although they themselves suffered from the effects of their parents' emotional and psychological wounds (see also Fogelman and Savran 1980; Hass 1990; Klein 1973). Ann mentioned, "I could never express my own anger or decisions." Ron, who worked as an engineer in the national public transportation company, remembered that at sixteen he started to openly rebel against his father's uncompromising authoritarian regime. He left home and refused all contact with him for five years. Looking back on his rebellion, he acknowledged:

Now I understand why he was so strict because at sixteen he was in a camp, so the goofing off I did at sixteen, he could not relate [to]. . . . [A]t sixteen, [he] was living in a hideous adult world which he could not imagine in his worst nightmares. He did not rebel because in a concentration camp, he learned to have a low profile.

Similarly, informants felt they must produce positive emotions (such as love, tenderness, forgiveness) toward their parents that they do not feel. Troubled by his inability to think about his parents with tenderness, Ben tried to resolve this predicament in a way that is common among other informants:

I hated [my father], but I don't think he was a bad man. He had to deal with his own internal conflicts. My father became an orphan at a very early age, and my mother

had her childhood brutally interrupted. . . . They never had a childhood, did not know what it was, did not know what it meant to have children. For them to become parents was such a miracle that it was too much . . . I often thought that when my father was violent with me there was on his face this expression of pure hatred. And he would say words, which I can't repeat right now, *horrible* words, and I don't know whether I thought that at that moment or whether I thought it later, but I told myself . . . this is what a Nazi torturer must have told him one day, you see?

On rare occasions, respondents mentioned that they were unable to forgive their parents or to acknowledge the positive aspects of their survival. Ben dramatically concretized this disposition when I suggested that one could also draw positive lessons from his parents' survival.

Ben: Like what? Resilience? Strength? Give me a break, will you? Sometimes when I see the terrible consequences of Hitler's work in them, in my generation . . . I know it will shock you, but sometimes I think that if *this* is the great victory, the great survival, maybe they shouldn't have survived.

S.G.: But you are alive, you are free, thanks to them.

Ben: Sorry. I don't buy it.

Table 1 summarizes the first category of deep acting. The case of the Second Generation is interesting because its members must organize the emotion work of

TABLE 1. Producing and Suppressing (in)Congruent Emotions

	Suppress	Produce
Positive Emotions		
Second Generation members <i>experience and/or desire to express</i>	Pleasure, joy, satisfaction, rebellious impulse, autonomy Self-esteem Satisfaction with self Exploration of limits Emotional closeness Sympathy for their own suffering Encouragement for their successes Validation of identity Development of identity	
Positive Emotions		
Second Generation members <i>neither experience nor desire to express toward parents</i>		Tenderness Forgiveness
Negative Emotions		
Second Generation members <i>neither experience nor desire to express</i>		Mourning Sadness Internalization of parents' trauma Anxieties Anhedonia
Negative Emotions		
Second Generation members <i>experience and/or desire to express toward parents</i>	Resentment Anger Hostility	

deep acting according to a reverse logic. Here, the emotions they *suppress* (pleasure, joy, happiness) are usually considered desirable and energizing, whereas those they must *produce* (mourning, sadness, anxiety) are usually considered undesirable and paralyzing. At the same time, they must extinguish negative emotions (anger, hostility, resentment) that they feel toward their parents and produce positive ones (forgiveness, tenderness) that they do not experience.

The felt necessity to experience and display positive emotions toward parents and to suppress negative ones is not the sole province of Second Generation members. What is unique, however, are the *justifications* they offer and the *strategies* they invoke to accomplish this work. As the excerpts above suggest, these chiefly consist in constantly bringing their parents' and relatives' past suffering into consciousness and in internalizing or appropriating this suffering as their own. As the excerpts below indicate, Second Generation members use this strategy in the other types of deep acting as well; but as we will also see, these strategies are not without costs.

In any case, whether by *repressing* positive and negative emotions they experience, desire, and want to express or by *producing* positive and negative emotions they neither experience, nor desire, nor want to express, Second Generation members often feel incapacitated by an emotional work they must perform and *resist* at the same time.

Tracing, Developing, and Defending Boundaries

The second category of deep acting that Second Generation members had to perform constitutes an adjustment to the premature *timing* of their emotional socialization and the subsequent unsettling of its sequential order. From their early years, informants felt they had to compensate for their parents' difficulties with tracing reasonable and/or consistent boundaries that would guide their children's behaviors, age-appropriate role-playing, and developing sense of self. When parents imposed unreasonably strict boundaries, children often wanted to rebel, but, at the same time, this prospect caused them quite a bit of guilt. Rebellion inevitably also meant hostility toward, dissent from, and challenges to their parents whom they felt had suffered enough. For example, in spite of the authoritarian regime he experienced at home, Ben explained his compulsion to obey as "resulting from both a moral imperative and a perverse culpability." Ann observed, "As the victim of the family, my mother was to be listened to and obeyed in everything because she was in the camps." She added that her mother would bring up Auschwitz to quell any sign of rebellion she or her sister displayed. Although never told this explicitly, a psychologist, Alice, mentioned that as a child she always felt rebelling meant "continuing the Nazi work."

In many other cases, however, the limits set by parents were too lax or vague. This produced a great deal of anxiety in their children and prompted them to assume the work of setting reasonable boundaries on their own. Laura saw her father as too permissive and reproached him for "not setting any standards" for her. Noah

described her growing up “without boundaries, control, or supervision,” and Alice explained that her father pushed autonomy while at the same time being overprotective. Lacking clear boundaries, Alice understood that those had to be “guessed or felt.” Sarah, a young and brilliant researcher in neuropsychology, said:

It's hard to construct your own limits. It leads to a lot of anxiety because you can only count on yourself; there is never anybody who comes and says, stop it, this is not good for you, so it's a terrible lack of protection. I suffer much from it. Think about it, enforcing limits is also a way for parents to tell their children they love them, care for them, and protect them. No limits . . . the message is implicitly: no protection.

But “boundaries” can also refer to a child's developing—with parents' assistance—an autonomous self that exists apart from parents' projections and definitions. This concept connotes a certain psychological private “space” wherein children experiment and develop. Auerhahn (1998), Danieli (1998), and Hass (1990) suggest that such boundaries are often too porous in survivors' families, and the survivor-offspring relationship lacks precisely such private space, which the offspring must continuously fight to trace, secure, and defend. In this context, my informants mentioned the concepts of enforced symbiotic relations and vicarious living as frequently as the literature reports them (Auerhahn and Laub 1998; Danieli 1998; Davidson 1980; Hass 1990; Klein-Parker 1988; Sigal and Weinfeld 1989). Noah mentioned a “fusional relationship” with her mother: “I live through her and can viscerally feel her anxieties.” Nathalie accused her father of being “hyper-possessive . . . , treating [her] like . . . his private property, suffocating [her],” and Alain also mentioned that his parents did not “le[t] any distance between” them. He often found himself having to control his “crankiness,” “impatience,” and “hostility” when interacting with his parents. Once he simply refused all contact with them for about two years, to “protect” himself and “get some breathing space.” Laura saw her relationship with her father as “a long honeymoon, as a lovers' relationship,” and added, “My father thinks we are one together, but this placed me in an unfair position vis-à-vis both him and my mother.”

As children, Second Generation members thus had to adjust to their parents' difficulties with tracing proper social and psychological boundaries by relying on the following strategies: (a) when too strict, they suppressed the healthy impulse to rebel⁶ and replaced it with obedience; (b) when too lax or inconsistent, they prematurely developed self-imposed limitations on their desire to explore and experience; (c) when too porous, they resisted—through confrontation and/or separation—their parents' gravitational pull so as to strengthen a sense of autonomous identity sufficiently differentiated from them. Yet resistance often rapidly escalated into painful emotional outbursts, and many respondents suggested that this strategy often was fraught with devastating guilt and, in any case, was rarely successful. Interestingly also, many informants frequently mentioned that they still struggle against the desire to remain invisible, to hide, to silence their desires to speak, and to stand up for themselves. As they also suggested, these tendencies adversely affect their performance and relations in the professional and romantic spheres.

Hierarchizing Suffering

The third category of deep acting constitutes an adjustment to the frequently mentioned reversal of *directionality* in emotional relations within survivors' families and the finding that Second Generation members often had to (prematurely) "parent their parents" (Aleksandrowicz 1973; Danieli 1998; Hass 1990; Kellerman 1999; Klein-Parker 1988; Sigal and Weinfeld 1989). This category comprises four interrelated strategies or steps: (a) internalizing parents' suffering, (b) comparing their own suffering to their parents', (c) minimizing the severity or priority of their own suffering, and (d) questioning their own resilience. The second category—the lack of boundaries—fosters hierarchizing one's own suffering, because such a lack increases Second Generation members' vulnerability to their parents' emotions (Hass 1990, 1995).

My informants' comments resounded with internalized parental suffering. Alain expressed this succinctly: "I never had to wear the yellow star on my coat, but I sure carry in me the fact that my mother had to." David suggested that his generation "are indirect survivors" who feel "skinned alive." Laura admitted to feeling anxious "about everything," and feeling "a total lack of safety, security, sense of protection." Diane mentioned, "My biggest fear is to have to go through what my mother lived through." Renee, a secretary in her late forties, listed forms of her suffering: "Panic attacks, depressive tendencies, fears, pessimism, and obsessive ideas of death. We carry the *weight of all this transmitted suffering*." Simultaneously, however, this internalized suffering also requires further deep acting in order to gain some control over its effects. As Ben explained:

You must always struggle so as not to be "swallowed" by this past suffering: knowing it happened, be conscious of it, but at a certain point you have to act as if it did not. But this is a difficult balancing act, I still don't know *how to manage it successfully*. It's a schizophrenic kind of thing. I know it is impossible, but somewhere this is something you *must try to do*. But how to approach things differently? How do you want to? I cannot heal from all this, but what I can try to do is perhaps learn to suffer less from it.

Michelle, the most vocal informant about internalized parental suffering and the constant emotional struggles it unleashed, frequently repeated the story of her mother's tortures in great detail and with palpable emotional upset. She felt "impregnated" by the Holocaust, and this term has profound significance because she attributed her difficulty with becoming pregnant to the medical and genetic experiments conducted on her mother in the concentration camp. Michelle admitted to being terrified of physical pain and to feeling extremely vulnerable while pregnant because her mother's stories about Nazis' treatments of pregnant women always remained at the forefront of her consciousness. As she put it:

Somewhere it is *unbearable*, but I cannot avoid these images, it's impossible. It is way stronger than you. And yes, to answer your questions, they come frequently, really really really . . . I can't say they destroy me, but they invade me in a suffocating way.

As Michelle confided to me, this internalized suffering affected her relationships with both her husband and her daughter, thereby transmitting the trauma of the Holocaust to the *third* generation:

Like I'm driving my daughter to school and think how cute she looks. I look at her and her skin so soft, so immaculate, so beautiful, and . . . suddenly . . . I see children in the camps, and I'm thinking, and to think she could be *there* at her age, or even before. Or as I take her in my arms, I think, but what if they would snatch her away from me now? And I feel I'd go *crazy* . . . like all those women in the camps who became crazy. My mother told me the stories of the women's bloc, those women whose children were snatched away from them, who had their children killed, their brothers killed, their mothers, sisters, their fathers killed . . . who became crazy, crazy, crazy to the point of being tied down. . . . The howls of these women, Simon! And when I look at my child, see her from a mother's perspective, I think about the camps . . . there is *not one day* that I don't have thoughts like these.

It is noteworthy that few of my informants are currently married or have children, in spite of their age (see also Auerhahn and Laub 1998; Glassman 1999). Those who do have children frequently mention troubled relationships with them and those who do not worry about transmitting their problems to the next generation (see Sigal and Weinfeld 1985, 1989). Ben, for example, has decided not to have children until he feels "healed" from his internalized suffering, although he doubts healing is possible. The idea that they might reproduce the relationships their parents imposed on them with their own children terrified Mark, Irene, David, and Ann. But they suspected they reproduced them anyway.

This internalized parental suffering also undermines the important sentiment of confidence (Barbalet 1998). Second Generation members approach the future with a certain apprehension (Hass 1995; Klein 1973; Sigal and Weinfeld 1989) that they must manage. The concrete manifestation of their apprehension focuses on anti-Semitism and the threat of renewed persecution. Informants were visibly worried, and informed, about current political events such as Haider's rise to power in Austrian politics, the rise of neo-Nazi movements in Belgium, France, Germany, and elsewhere, and the numerous symptoms of anti-Semitism they encounter in the workplace, in their children's schools, on graffiti in public spaces, and in the media.⁷ As Michelle remarked, "You receive mail from the Jewish community and that museum, and this magazine, and the Jewish community center. You are listed everywhere. Now, assume the assholes come to power again, we're back again at the same point. All of us are on file." When asked whether they think there might be another Holocaust, many answered affirmatively. When asked what they would do if it did reoccur, many mentioned "fleeing" and "hiding," others responded that they would rely on the political process, and still others answered that they would join the resistance and fight.⁸ Still, many informants also admitted their utter helplessness if they faced such a situation. At the extreme, Diane answered that she would commit suicide.

But Second Generation members also experience this apprehension in more

diffuse and abstract forms—as a sort of free-floating anxiety. Alain admitted he suffers from paranoid fears; Daniel spoke of a general “anxiety toward life”; Michelle, Sarah, and Renee became extremely anxious when they went on trips that necessitated temporary separation from loved ones; and many others reported the frequent fear of being “conned,” “betrayed,” or “tricked.” Many informants had experienced eerily similar nightmares of being pursued, having to escape and hide, and being physically assaulted by shadows in uniforms.

The internalization of their parents’ suffering, and the resulting anxieties, fears, and other reactions informants must constantly manage, is also organized by what researchers have called the logic of the “impossible comparison” (see Glassman 1999; Hass 1990; Klein-Parker 1988). Summarized by Alain as “the hierarchy of suffering,” this term refers to survivor parents’ implicit and sometimes explicit remarks that the crises, pain, and difficulties of the Second Generation were benign and inconsequential when compared to the suffering they themselves had endured during the war. As Davidson (1980), Hass (1995), and Sigal and Weinfeld (1989) imply, such comparisons meant that parents were often relatively unsympathetic to their children’s “normal” crises and rather intolerant of their expression of pain and need for support. Renee’s remark illustrates perhaps most clearly the extreme of such a disposition. While experiencing a variety of difficulties in her professional and marital life, she remembered her mother telling her that she “would not have lasted fifteen minutes in Auschwitz.”

Parents did not always make such explicit comparisons, and Second Generation members often voluntarily decided, early on, to spare their parents any additional distress by attending to their emotional concerns themselves (Hass 1990). Daniella remarked, “Since my father has survived Auschwitz, who am I to surrender? We have to be strong, the strongest, and this is what I tell myself and teach my own children.”

Reframing their difficulties according to this comparative logic then leads Second Generation members to minimize their own pain, which always pales in comparison to their parents’. Michelle, for example, remembered feeling terribly cold while waiting for a bus early one morning not too long ago and immediately catching herself in her internal monologue of complaints:

Cold? You call *this* cold? But prisoners in the camps had to go working fourteen hours a day, more, without food, without proper clothes, without real shoes, without medication. . . . They would be killed if they fell sick. So what is *your* own discomfort in comparison? Really! What do you got? I sometimes feel so guilty when I’m laying on my bed looking at my painting that does not progress, and I tell myself, How *dare you* not do anything while you are free, while you have everything while they did not have anything? Who are you next to those who survived? You are nothing. It is an attitude I have in relation to my mother and myself. Who are you who haven’t lived anything? Who are you to complain? Whether it’s a failure, a pain, anything, my approach is, what are you coming with here? There is a sort of ladder of values which is so disproportionate. It’s full of ambiguities and contradictions, and sometimes you are *neutralized* by all the force of this horror; maybe that’s where inertia comes from? It *paralyzes* you.

For Nicole, “no pain, no difficulty is really that severe after Auschwitz.” And Sandra said:

Both my parents had passions and ambitions they could not fulfill because of the war, so I tell myself, I can lead the life I always wanted, I earn my life, I can buy everything I want. You *have to be happy* about this. It’s a gift. I feel privileged in comparison to them.

Second Generation members manage this hierarchy of pain by relying on a fourth strategy—questioning their own strength and resilience. They wondered if they would have endured and survived the horrible ordeals their parents obviously had. Alain admitted he “would not have passed the selection in the camps”; Ron saw his father as “a monument”; Sarah confided, “Of course, I told myself many times, when you get down to it, I don’t know whether I would have survived . . . really where would I hide?”

Taken together, these strategies articulate Second Generation members’ constant decisions to “protect” their parents’ emotional well-being by silencing their own suffering and needs for parental sympathy and by managing both through other means. However, when they hierarchize their own pain and resilience by comparing themselves to their parents (the “impossible comparison” logic), Second Generation members evaluate themselves according to a pathological yardstick or frame of reference. In other words, they evoke the most atrocious conditions human beings can be subjected to in order to assess their present conditions and to respond “appropriately.”

Compensating for Parents’ Difficulties

The fourth category of deep acting members of the Second Generation perform constitutes a reaction—or adjustment—to their parents’ difficulties with emotion management. Because parents often displayed extreme emotional *intensities*, whether too little or too much, children often felt they had to compensate prematurely for this disequilibrium. Three themes, emotional inaccessibility, threatening unpredictability, and fragility, are especially salient in this fourth category.

Emotional Inaccessibility

Second Generation members often perceived that their parents were oriented toward an emotionally compelling “past” and therefore “elsewhere.” Hence they could not attend to their children’s needs here and now (Aleksandrowicz 1973; Glassman 1999; Hass 1990, 1995). Amanda described her mother as “emotionally inaccessible” and added that she never had a meaningful conversation with her. Michelle remarked, “My parents never really gave us any signs of affection.” Mike emphasized his father’s indifference to him, and, following therapy, his understanding that he had to “relearn those emotions that are ‘normal’ for others and regain some self-esteem.” Alain states, “My father was never really present for me.”

Second Generation members reacted to this emotional inaccessibility in three ways. First, they initiated emotional contacts with their parents and induced them to display appropriate emotional gestures. Sandra, in her late thirties, a public relations consultant in a well-known European petrochemical corporation, and one of my few happy, optimistic, and outgoing respondents, provides a good example:

My father was very nondemonstrative and had a great deal of difficulty showing his affection. And I would *force him to hug me* and take me into his arms, and it would drive him crazy. . . . We could talk about many things, but he was always very careful not to touch on the affective, to keep everything at an intellectual level.

Second, informants adjusted to emotional inaccessibility by controlling their own needs for emotional attention. As Ron stated:

My father would just get in a bad mood, and I did not know why. When he was thinking about the camps, he would put on classical music, sit in his armchair, and listen, and tears would just pour. He would not sob or anything, and my mother would say, "Leave your father alone!" and we knew we had to leave him alone because he would not accept anything. . . . We would go toward him to hug him, my sister and me, but during those times, no one could get near. Not his wife, not his daughter, not me, until he would get out of it. It could last for hours.

The third, more extreme strategy was offered by Linda, a fiftyish psychiatric nurse, who described her father as emotionless, distant, removed, and permanently isolated in a world of suffering no one could penetrate or understand. To better "connect" with him, she mentioned *desiring* suffering, and went so far as to inflict pain on her own body in order to close the distance that separated her from her father (see also Hass 1990:131).

Threatening Unpredictability

Sometimes parents' sudden outbursts of verbal and physical violence concretized difficulties with emotion management. Thus Ben described his father:

[He] poured concrete over his emotions, he was incapable of showing anything. But he was also an extremely violent person who could express terrible cruelty through facial gestures. He would lock me up in a cellar, would go absolutely crazy, was emotionally inaccessible, and traumatized me so much I wished he would die. . . . I've never known my father, and when I try to imagine my parents' laughter, I just can't.

To preempt such outbursts and to protect themselves, many respondents said that they constantly controlled their own anger or hostility, obeyed, and kept a low profile. As several respondents also confided to me, these strategies that they invoked as children continue to haunt them in their adult relationships with partners, employers, and children.

Emotional Fragility

Some survivors experienced the opposite kinds of difficulties with emotion management. These parents displayed an unusual emotional fragility that also required emotional work on their children's part. As Sarah remarked:

Because there never was this emotional contact where my father would talk about emotional things, now as soon as he approaches me with emotional topics, I feel very bad, very uncomfortable, really very bad, I don't know what to do, I *want to fix things*, help him out, but feel helpless facing this distress. . . . I really feel I have to protect my father, really strongly. So I don't criticize him, I am afraid it will touch him, there is this idea that he had his dose of suffering and you can't bother him.

In this situation, therefore, children avoid discussing certain topics with their parents in order to protect them against emotional upset, which they would not be able to manage efficiently.

Whether by (a) inducing their parents to display appropriate emotions or reducing their own emotional needs, (b) suppressing hostile emotions in themselves, or (c) censoring certain of their behaviors and needs, Second Generation individuals thus point at a fourth type of deep acting that attempts to compensate for, respectively, their perceived parents' emotional inaccessibility, threatening unpredictability, and fragility. Here again, informants justify these strategies on the grounds of parents' past suffering and their reluctance to cause any more suffering in the present.

CONCLUSIONS

In this work, I have approached the problematic emotional dispositions Second Generation members experience with Hochschild's insights on "emotion management." Whereas most research explains such dispositions by means of psychological and psychiatric models and concepts, I explain them as resulting from a (self-)imposed, continuous, constant, and unattainable injunction to perform four types of deep acting. These types—producing and suppressing (in)congruent emotions, tracing boundaries, hierarchizing suffering, and compensating for parental difficulties with emotion management—are interrelated and reciprocal. I suggest that they constitute adjustments to four problematic kinds of emotional dynamics (type and frequency, timing, directionality and intensity, respectively) characterizing survivor families.

The first and central category of deep acting pertains to the production and suppression of (in)congruent emotions and constitutes an adjustment to the *types and frequencies* of emotions characterizing survivors' families. It requires (a) the *suppression of negative emotions* they *do* experience but *should not*, (b) the *production of positive emotions* they *do not* necessarily experience but *should*, (c) the *suppression of positive emotions* they *want* to experience but *should not*, and (d) the *production of negative emotions* they *do not want* to experience but *should*. Second Generation members accomplish this work mainly by forcing their parents' past

suffering into consciousness. But since many informants see such emotion work as incapacitating and painful, they must also attempt to counteract its consequences.

The tracing of boundaries—the second category of deep acting—can be understood as a reaction to problems in the *timing* and *sequence* in the socialization of Second Generation members. It entails the felt necessity to establish emotional boundaries *for* themselves and *between* themselves and their parents. They attempt to accomplish these tasks by (a) suppressing rebellious impulses, when the boundaries are too strict, (b) prematurely setting limits on their natural desires to experiment and discover, when the boundaries are too lax or inconsistent, and (c) resisting their parents' gravitational pull through confrontation and separation, when these boundaries seem too porous.

Yet these attempts at tracing and defending boundaries for and around themselves are jeopardized by the reverse *directionality* of relationships existing in many survivors' families, and the four interrelated strategies grouped in the third category of deep acting—hierarchizing pain—constitute a reaction to this reversal. Thus, to protect their parents from additional pain and anxiety, Second Generation members (a) internalize their parents' suffering, (b) compare their own suffering and crises with their parents' past experiences, (c) minimize the severity or priority of their own suffering, and (d) question their own strength, courage, and resilience. While these strategies may have immediate positive consequences, they in turn generate further emotional problems that Second Generation members must manage.

The three strategies included in the fourth type of deep acting—compensating for parents' difficulties—result from the reverse directionality in the parent-child relationship and constitute reactions to the emotional *intensity* characterizing the survivors' relations with their offspring. Thus Second Generation members feel they must adjust for their parents' perceived emotional inaccessibility, threatening unpredictability, and fragility by, respectively, (a) inducing parents to display appropriate emotions or repressing their own emotional needs for parental attention, (b) controlling the expression of angry emotions or any behavior that might trigger unpredictable violence, and (c) avoiding topics of conversation, behaviors, or situations that might exacerbate their parents' emotional fragility.

Rather than explain the dispositions typically reported about the Second Generation in terms of a generational "syndrome" or as resulting from (transmitted) depressive or other tendencies, I suggest that they result from premature, permanent, and disempowering emotion work—a generation-specific and unpayable emotional debt toward traumatized parents, a traumatic past, and its ghosts. In addition to promoting a different understanding of the dispositions Second Generation members display, these interpretations might also be theoretically useful as they seem to constitute "extreme" cases of emotion work, or a different kind from the one typically encountered in nonsurvivor families.

Beyond the modest theoretical contributions this article provides to the sociology of emotions, it could also inform the intervention strategies we use while attending to the long-term emotional needs of traumatized populations and their offspring.

While human-made disasters continue to brutalize increasing numbers of people worldwide, one first and obvious lesson learned from Second Generation research suggests that when left unattended the traumas suffered by one generation continue to be visited upon successive ones. The second lesson the present findings suggest revolve around the thread common to the various deep acting strategies discussed above. To return to Hochschild's discussion of deep acting (1983:38–42): "There are two ways of doing deep acting. One is by directly exhorting feeling, the other by making indirect use of a trained imagination."

The case of the Second Generation is informative because members continuously exhort appropriate feelings *by relying* on a trained imagination (collective memory, stories, pictures, movies, monuments, graves, and other texts) that emphasizes *suffering*, and that positions their parent-survivors in particularly disturbing ways. Paradoxically, therefore, this focused attention (or trained imagination) on parents' past suffering both reproduces the parents' victim status and fosters a feeling of victimization in the offspring.

More precisely, as the first generation of indirect witnesses of a particularly vile slice of modern Western history, Second Generation members feel they have been delegated, *de facto*, the duty to devote their lives to compensate for losses that cannot, reasonably, be replaced; to alleviate a grief that cannot, realistically, be lessened. For many, this grief suffused the physical space in which they were born and grew up. It formed its emotional climate, its underlying premise, its constant theme, and, hence, the most compelling justification for their performing emotional work. But such work also leads Second Generation members to feel victimized both by history and, more ambiguously, by their parents who themselves are victims. As a result, they often feel paralyzed in an excruciating generational "double-bind" (Bateson et al. 1956)—a simultaneously unavoidable and unbearable position. Ben summed it up most succinctly when he remarked that "it is a form of unconscious violence you direct against yourself," a "schizophrenic" situation. In such a context, then, the terms "zombie," "numb," "inertia," "prisoners," "invaded," "invisible," and "paralyzed" that guided this analysis become especially illuminating.⁹

But since Second Generation members feel they cannot desist from performing this impossible emotional work, it seems that diminishing its "suffering" dimension and heightening its "survival" aspect would significantly transform it, attenuate its disempowering and paralyzing consequences for both survivors and offspring, recast both in a very different light, and lead to more harmonious relationships between them. Although it might be too late to effectively replace "suffering" with "survival" stories among Holocaust survivors and their offspring,¹⁰ this strategy might prove timely for transmitting the lessons of the Holocaust to the third generation and useful for helping other survivor populations to transmit their experiences to their children.

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NOTES

1. An inquiry to AMCHA, the Israeli organization mandated to study Holocaust families, yielded a bibliography of 348 articles, and these include only scholarship in English and Hebrew up to the year 2000. Since much research has also been conducted in non-English-speaking countries, the full list of existing works is much larger.
2. Interestingly, many researchers have found that survivors often married individuals who under other circumstances would have been found incompatible (see Haas 1995).
3. I have explored these topics and will discuss them in future papers.
4. Kemper's structural model illuminates the relinquishing of power that children often resent (see Collins 1990; Franks 1989; Kemper 1990a, 1990b).
5. Second Generation members evoke this presence with words such as "ghosts," "spirits," "demons," and "dybbuk." The latter term refers to a traditional Jewish belief that the (not necessarily evil) spirit of a person who has died under unnatural circumstances, finding itself caught between this world and the next, takes possession of the body and mind of a living member of the community where it used to live. The spirit will thus continue to haunt the living until the unnatural conditions have been rectified or until it is properly exorcised.
6. It is also noteworthy that Second Generation members were teenagers when they had to work at extinguishing their rebellious impulses. Because their adolescence coincided with the 1960s and 1970s—a period marked by the "generation gap" and youth rebellion—this work must have been all the more difficult.
7. As the period during which these data were conducted (September 2000) coincided with the sparking of the "Second Intifada" in Israel, as informants and many members of the Jewish community frequently and publicly criticized the not-too-subtle anti-Zionist bias of Belgian and French news broadcasts, and as the number of violent anti-Semitic acts rose sharply in Europe, this anxiety about the present and the future is not surprising. Judging by my informants' discussions, it seems clear that the Holocaust remains a powerful cognitive framework within which respondents interpret these events.
8. Interestingly, the strategies informants offered often paralleled those their parents used.
9. Mills and Kleinman (1988:1012) observed similarities in battered women: "numbness seems to be one way for people to stay in a bad situation from which they believe they cannot escape." Their respondents articulated this sentiment clearly. Still, the analogy between victims of abusive conjugal relationships and members of the Second Generation can only be pushed so far. Battered women can extinguish positive emotions toward their abusive husbands or produce adversarial ones that enable them to break free. The Second Generation cannot. They can neither quit being children to their parents nor "divorce" them. In addition, their early internalized parental suffering compels them to attend to their parents' constant and unsatisfiable emotional needs.
10. This emphasis on heroism and strength rather than on victimization and suffering has become an especially prominent narrative in Israeli society.

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