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AFTERNOON SESSION B 16:30-18:00

The Lessons of Holocaust Rescue for Teaching the Psychology of Altruism and Prosocial Behavior

by

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Introduction

What can the Holocaust teach us about prosocial behavior? The human capacity for evil was amply demonstrated in the events of the Shoah: the planned and premeditated destruction of six million Jews. The plan to exterminate all Jews or the "final solution" was conceived in the minds and hearts of Nazi leaders (Browning, 1995; Gutman & Berenbaum, 1998). However, implementation of the final solution became possible through the collective actions of a much broader range of people (Goldhagen, 1997). Some of the enablers of the Holocaust performed isolated bureaucratic acts that facilitated the Nazi killing machine. Others did not do anything, but through their silence made Hitler's goals easier to accomplish. Many people, preoccupied with their own suffering, felt that rescuing others was not their responsibility and therefore reacted with indifference (Monroe, 1996; Steinlauf, 1997).

Although most Jews perished, a small number were rescued by righteous Gentiles. Prosocial acts of rescue were possible even under the difficult and dangerous conditions of Nazi occupation. Rescue required overt opposition to the system of extermination (Tec, 1986). A rescuer had to disobey Nazi guidelines for the treatment of Jews. Therefore, significant costs were associated with acts of rescue. The stories of rescuers provide us with an opportunity to better understand the psychology of altruism. What motivated the rescuers? How did rescuers make the decision when and how to act?

Incurring danger to oneself and one's closest kin while rescuing non-kin provides a challenge to the assumptions made by sociobiologists and behaviorists. Human beings, in these frameworks, are primarily motivated by their own benefits and the survival of their offspring. Therefore all human behavior (including prosocial acts of rescue) is believed to have an underlying egoistic motivation (Batson, 1998; Burnstein, Crandall & Kitayama, 1994). Helping non-kin and endangering one's own children or siblings would seem to be an evolutionary improbability. The criterion for altruism is the lack of benefits and/or the presence of costs associated with an act. Altruistic acts should be motivated or guided primarily by concern or empathy with a person's suffering. Benefits that may occur later as a result of the act should be unintended. Is altruistically motivated behavior even possible under such stringent criteria?

The Holocaust represents an acid test for the existence of altruism. The need for assistance was great. Millions of Jews were battling hunger, disease and death behind the walls of ghettos. The machinery of mass destruction unleashed in the death camps claimed millions who could not escape or hide unless aided by others. The costs of helping Jews survive ranged from imprisonment to death. The large magnitude of both needs (destruction of millions of people) and costs (sometimes death) created a difficult dilemma or as Kren and Rappoport (1980) have called it "a crisis of human behavior". Case histories of Holocaust rescue offer a unique opportunity for an understanding of human action under extreme conditions.

1998). Genovese was murdered over a fairly long time period. Her death may have been preventable had someone done as little as calling the police. The inaction of the bystanders that enabled Kitty Genovese's murderer to complete his act was particularly troubling. As a result, early psychological research focused on understanding the reasons why people do not help (Batson, 1998; Latane & Darley, 1970). More recently psychologists have attempted to pinpoint the motivations that underlie prosocial action: Is there evidence for truly altruistic actions, and what is the nature of altruistic motives? This paper will demonstrate the use of case histories to illustrate the variety of motives that can guide altruistic acts.

Holocaust rescue and prosocial motivation

Although proponents of sociobiology would lead us to believe that helping non-kin while endangering oneself and one's family (especially one's biological children) is an evolutionary improbability, one cannot deny that apparently selfless prosocial acts did occur during the Holocaust (Fogelman, 1994). Holocaust rescue activities, such as hiding someone in one's home, often required careful planning, sustained effort and close proximity of rescuer and rescued over a long period of time (Oliner & Oliner, 1988). Hiding a Jew involved obtaining food, as well as covertly taking care of a variety of other personal needs. Thus, the personal involvement and intimacy of contact between rescuer and rescued were considerable. Holocaust rescue in some cases presents an unusual combination of long-term nurturing and high levels of risk.

Helping may or may not be altruistically motivated. Prosocial actions sometimes lead to personal gain (Batson, 1998). Some Gentiles helped Jews in exchange for payment or other favorable outcomes. Yad Vashem recognizes this ambiguity and applies rigorous evaluation criteria prior to bestowing the honor of Righteous Among the Nations upon an individual rescuer. Criteria include lack of material or other forms of personal gain as well as the existence of significant costs (dangers and risks). Furthermore, the rescuer's efforts must have been instrumental in the successful survival of at least one Jew (Grobman, 1999).

Accurate recognition of another's needs is a necessary, though not sufficient condition of altruistically motivated prosocial action (Fogelman, 1994). When needs are perceived correctly several possible outcomes can occur. An individual may simply take in the information but do nothing to help (e.g., "I can see that these people are starving"). An emotional reaction of sympathy or empathy may result from recognition of needs (e.g., "it is terrible to see such suffering"). Finally, recognition of needs may lead to the setting of a prosocial goal either precipitated by empathy or not ("I could smuggle some food to these people", Smolenska & Reykowski, 1992). The setting of a prosocial action goal is necessary for successful rescue.

According to Smolenska and Reykowski (1992) rescuers were motivated by one of three categories of motives: allocentric, normocentric, and/or axiological. Allocentric motives are aroused by empathy with another's suffering. Allocentrically motivated rescuers would be most likely to help those that they directly come in contact with. Direct contact guards against intellectualization or denial of the suffering. Perceived similarity between rescuer and rescued facilitates empathy (Batson, 1998). An individual motivated in this manner wishes to alleviate the suffering of others.

Normocentric motives result from the activation of one or more social norms (Smolenska & Reykowski, 1992). Two norms are particularly relevant to helping: reciprocity (helping others who have helped us) and social responsibility (helping those who depend on us for assistance; Batson, 1998; Schroeder, ET al., 1995). Social norms help maintain positive group relations. Adherence to norms is strongly influenced by a supportive religious or

Finally, axiological motives originate from general principles or values, such as justice or respect for human life. The main goal of a prosocial action is to reaffirm one or more of these principles. Two value systems have been noted as undergirding altruistic acts: the ethic of justice (a la Kohlberg) and the ethic of caring (a la Gilligan; Batson, 1998; Wundheiler, 1986). Rescuers who were acting on the basis of axiological motives were in a sense fighting the Nazis and the values exemplified by them via their rescue activities (e.g., Zofia Kossak the founder of Zegota; Palaszewska, 1999).

Fogelman (1994) provides the following typology of rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust: moral rescuers, Judeophiles, concerned professionals, network rescuers, and child rescuers. Fogelman's typology of persons (with the exclusion of child rescuers) can be elaborated as a listing of altruistic motivational bases underlying the rescue of Jews during the Holocaust:

1. moral value systems (humanitarian ideologies and values)
2. friendship with Jews growing out of individual relationships or fondness for Jewish religion or culture
3. ideological opposition to Nazi policies within one's profession (medical doctors, social workers, diplomats, etc.) and
4. membership in an organization opposing Nazi policies

The Smolenska /Reykowski (1992) and the Fogelman (1994) category systems overlap. As can be seen in Table 1, Judeophiles would be most likely to consist of allocentrically motivated rescuers. It is via personal relationships or at least some personal contact that empathy is likely to develop. Network rescuers are likely to be influenced in their rescue activities by the social norms that they have developed within their network group. For example, members of some underground organizations saw the rescue of Jews as part of their responsibility as organization members. Moral rescuers are clearly acting on the basis of value systems and ideologies either religious or secular. Axiologically motivated rescuers act to articulate a value system or ideology. Therefore, these rescuers would be expected to affirm their values (justice or caring) whenever these are threatened.

It should also be stated that more than one motive category may be influential in the case of a particular rescuer at a particular time. For example, a network rescuer may be part of an organization because it is an effective way of reaffirming threatened values. The motive categories are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, a rescuer may also act out of different psychological bases at various times.

Table 1: Altruistic Motives and Rescuer Type

Motive category	Allocentric	Normocentric	Axiological
Psychological basis	relationships and empathy	social norms and group dynamics	situation independent values and ideologies
Rescuer type	Judeophiles	network rescuers Judeophiles (reciprocity) concerned professionals	moral rescuers concerned professionals

Can the Smolenska and Reykowski (1992) and Fogelman (1994) category systems facilitate our understanding of individual rescuers? The following section will explore the case histories of two very different rescuers: Corrie ten Boom (The Netherlands) and Oskar Schindler (a Sudeten German). Ten Boom hid Jews in her home and participated in a rescue network. Schindler protected Jews employed in his industrial enterprise. As time elapsed he sacrificed economic profits for the purpose of saving as many Jews as possible.

Corrie ten Boom case history

Corrie ten Boom was not a child at the time of the Holocaust, nor was she in a professional situation of helping. While her family in generations past had significant connections with Jews, Corrie fundamentally held all Jews in high regard. She had work relations with some but it was her attitude towards them as equal citizens and as God's Chosen People that fueled her desire to help. While the ten Booms were part of a network of rescuers, and were adamantly anti-Nazi, this too is not the motivation behind the woman Corrie ten Boom. Her motivations, and those of all her family members: father, sisters, nephews and nieces seem to be motivations of morality (Fogelman, 1994).

A distinction can be made among three types of moral rescue motivation: ideological, religious, and emotional. Ideological morality is based on a person's sense of justice and ethics. Individuals representing this morality are often active politically. Religious-moral rescuers are those who live by the Golden Rule and show tolerance for people different from themselves. Often these rescuers had to break with their priests or pastors who were Nazi collaborators. The third type of moral motivation is emotionally based. Such rescuers felt great compassion for Nazi victims and desired to help them. Their responses came from "compassion and pity" while their morality was based on "caring and responsibility" (Fogelman, 1994, pp. 163-164).

Many would conclude that since Corrie ten Boom was such a religious and spiritual minded person, she must be a religious-moral rescuer. Religious-moral rescuers were people who often looked to biblical stories such as the Good Samaritan as their cues and can best be understood "in the context of their church affiliation, their country of residence, and the period of their rescue behavior" (Fogelman, 1994, p. 170). Two types of religious motivation can be distinguished: intrinsic (those who have internalized the precepts of

child. She had great compassion for people who were suffering. So it is in the categories of both religious-moral and emotional-moral motivation that the rescuer Corrie ten Boom is found. She helped both those who were outcast and shunned as well as those who were socially accepted. Corrie's giving was without religious or ethnic distinctions. Her sense of right and wrong can be traced to the religious teachings of her parents. Corrie's sense of caring and responsibility were based on her faith and spirituality. These qualities can be seen through the Ten Boom family tree and in Corrie throughout her lifespan.

Cornelia ten Boom came from a long line of good-hearted and giving people. Her grandfather Willem taught all of his children a respect and love for Jews, which they passed on to their children (Carlson, 1983). Corrie's father Casper ten Boom was a devout Calvinist, and her mother Cor was a Dutch Reformed Protestant. From so many who would teach her the lessons of life, "Corrie emerged as a woman who was a product of her heritage, strongly imprinted by her ancestors' lessons" (Carlson, 1983, p. 19).

When Casper started his first jewelry store, it was in the heart of the Jewish quarter of Amsterdam. Because of this proximity and his love of the people he was able to participate with them in their Sabbath and holy days. He also studied the Old Testament and the Talmud. (ten Boom & Carlson, 1976).

Corrie was the fifth child born to Casper and Cor in 1892. The ten Boom family was very close knit. They read from the Bible and prayed together daily. Early on Corrie formed a special relationship with her father. The desire to please her father was what Corrie herself called one of the basic motivations of her life (ten Boom & Carlson, 1976). She lovingly remembered how her father valued each individual person and made everyone feel important. Casper ten Boom showed his children what it meant to help others. Corrie never married and instead devoted her life to service.

Corrie and her family worked to help others in numerous ways. After the devastation of World War I, the ten Boom family consulted together on what they could do to help alleviate the suffering of many Europeans. They specifically took notice of children who were suffering from malnutrition (ten Boom & Carlson, 1976). Because of Casper's many watchmaker contacts in Germany, it was settled that a plan to help children could be implemented through this channel. The ten Booms brought many children to the Netherlands. They themselves took four children and one adult into their home (ten Boom & Carlson, 1976).

Corrie had been engaged in public service for decades (youth club work, work with the learning disabled, etc.) by the time the Nazis set up a government in Holland in 1940. "Although their family was their first priority, next to their devotion to the Lord, they were not afraid to get involved with people who were in need. They shared their home, their food, their money, and their God with others" (Carlson, 1983, p. 30). When they were given the opportunity to do small tasks for the cause, the ten Boom family willingly accepted. As the need grew, so did their involvement. For Casper, Betsie, and Corrie ten Boom, when Germany decided to take action against the Jews, they were ready.

The initial contact for the full-time hiding of Jews was made by Corrie's brother Willem who was a pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church and a rescuer. In 1930 Willem had presented a thesis to a panel at Delitcheanum in Dresden, Germany on racial anti-Semitism. Prophetically he predicted the world's worst pogrom of Jews as occurring in Germany (ten Boom & Carlson, 1976). When the Jews in Holland were first made to wear the yellow star, Casper ten Boom went to the public square and waited in line with all the community's Jews, for his star of David. He commented that if all Dutch people were to wear the stars, the

early on. Casper had taught his children to love and respect all people, including Jews. Corrie's altruistic intentions are exemplified in a prayer she said before arranging for the construction of a secret hiding place in her home. "Lord Jesus, I offer myself for Your people. In any way. Any place. Any time" (ten Boom, Sherrill, & Sherrill, 1971, p. 74). She kept her promise.

During the Nazi Occupation, the ten Booms hid Jews, as well as Gentiles who were targeted by the Nazis. The ten Boom family was involved in many activities. Corrie is known first and foremost for the hiding place that was built in her bedroom. Everything was thought of from outside venting to water, hardtack and vitamins (ten Boom, Sherrill, & Sherrill, 1971, pp. 83, 85-88). Those who stayed in the ten Booms' home ate together, shared in the household chores, read scriptures and prayed together, and even put on plays and evenings of entertainment, celebrating all faiths' holidays. Although the Jews and other guests slept in spare rooms throughout the house an alarm system had been installed to alert them of danger. This would allow those in hiding a chance to run to the top floor of the long house and slide into the small closet behind a false wall in Corrie's bedroom.

Corrie became efficient at riding her bicycle across the community and countryside to warn the underground and Jews, get supplies (ration cards for food and clothes) and money, as well as delivering messages. Corrie notes in one of her books "our task was to help them [Jews] escape to safer countries. When that was no longer possible, we [the underground network] hid them in our houses. In the end we had a group of eighty people with whom we worked to supply the desperate needs of hidden people: food, clothing, houses, burials" (ten Boom, 1977, p. 15). There were many risks involved in hiding Jews. On more than one occasion the BeJe house had to be emptied of its occupants to avoid arrest (Poley, 1993, pp. 79-84).

Eventually Corrie along with other family members was arrested. Corrie spent four months in solitary confinement at a prison and then was transferred with her sister to Ravensbrück. Her sister Betsie died in December of 1944. Corrie was released on a clerical error weeks after her beloved sister's death. Casper ten Boom died after 10 days in prison. In fact all the family rescuers but Corrie, her nephew Peter, Willem and Nollie (both of whom died shortly after the war) died at the hands of the Nazis for their altruistic actions.

Regarding the motivational basis underlying Corrie ten Boom's rescue activities, it appears that Corrie acted out of the deep moral principle of sanctity of life. When a person such as Corrie sees that her beliefs and values are being trampled on, she feels compelled to act. Because it was a matter of principle, Corrie helped people from various social and ethnic groups. The persecution of Jews by the Nazis created the greatest need. This is why Corrie rescued so many Jews. Corrie had a deep religious conviction of how people should be treated and her faith defined her values. When she saw people in need of her help, she gave it (Smolenska & Reykowski, 1992, pp. 215-219).

While in her 80s, Corrie wrote her last book describing who she had been prior to World War II. She stated, "a person doesn't spring into existence at the age of fifty; there are years of preparation, years of experience, which God uses in ways we may never know until we meet Him face to face" (ten Boom & Carlson, 1976, p. 185). Her entire life was a culmination of activities that cultivated her love for others and her desire to serve. The events of the Holocaust were merely a space of time during which her focus was on the survival of Jews. Prior to World War II, she had lived a life of generosity. Her imprisonment did not deter her. Even after the war, she gave her life to others, circling the globe over four decades to share her experiences and uplift others (ten Boom & Buckingham,

Oskar Schindler- case history

Oskar Schindler was a German industrialist with an unremarkable record of prosocial activities both before and after the war. His heroic rescue of Jews in Nazi occupied Poland resulted in saving more than 1,200 lives. According to Wundheiler (1986), Schindler developed from a person motivated primarily by self-interest into a principled altruist over the course of the war. Wundheiler's view is not shared by everyone and there is still considerable disagreement today over the nature of Schindler's motives (Jones, 1998).

Schindler was born in Zwittau in 1908. His relationship with his mother, a devout Catholic, was very close. However, he did not get along well with his father the owner of a farm machinery business. This business went bankrupt prior to the beginning of the war and Schindler had to strike out on his own. Oskar was married at the age of twenty to a woman who, like his mother, was a devout Catholic. This marriage was not a happy one and the couple remained childless, though Schindler fathered several children out of wedlock.

Schindler joined the Nazi party in 1938, perhaps as an aid to his career as a salesman (Wundheiler, 1986). Immediately after the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939, Schindler came to Krakow to take advantage of business opportunities that were developing as a result of the war and the German Aryanization policies (Jones, 1998). He was able to acquire the factory later known as Emalia by accepting the capital to purchase it from the former Jewish factory owner Bankier, in exchange for Bankier's employment in the factory (Jones, 1998). Schindler's employment of Jews in his factory was no doubt initially motivated by his agreement with Bankier (reciprocity) as well as by the availability and low cost of Jewish labor. Due to the infusion of capital (from Bankier) and low costs of operation (inexpensive labor) Schindler's factory made enormous profits (Keneally, 1993).

While in Krakow, Schindler developed a close relationship with Itzhak Stern, a Jewish accountant who appeared to play the role of friend and father figure throughout Schindler's life (Keneally, 1993; Wundheiler, 1986). It was Stern who prompted Schindler initially to hire more Jews to work in Emalia. As Schindler did more for his workers, he appeared to develop more interest and initiative in helping them.

Wundheiler (1986) divides Schindler's activities in Poland into three phases. The first phase, dating from Schindler's arrival in Krakow in September 1939 up until March 1941, involved the establishment of the Emalia factory. During this period any helping of Jews can be considered as instrumental to the establishment of Schindler as a successful industrialist (Jones, 1998).

The second period dating from the creation of the Krakow ghetto and ending in the summer of 1944 involved more intense rescue activities. Stern increased his requests for the employment of Jews in Emalia, because after the establishment of the ghetto Jews were more at risk than before. Schindler complied with Stern's requests and the number of Jews employed in Emalia increased dramatically. In order to protect his workers from the harsh conditions of the Plaszow labor camp, Schindler constructed barracks for his workers adjacent to Emalia. During this time, Schindler also was involved in smuggling Jewish children out of the Krakow ghetto. It appears that the cruelty and suffering witnessed by Schindler (particularly during the liquidation of the ghetto) evoked his compassion. Indeed, kindness and sensitivity are frequently mentioned by Schindler's Jews (Brecher, 1994). Schindler was also approached by a Zionist group, traveled to Budapest at their request, and he transferred money and information for them.

The third period dated from the summer of 1944 to May 1945 and Germany's defeat. During

beneficial to the operations of the factory. As the war progressed, Schindler's profits decreased. Many of Emalia's wares were sold by Schindler on the black market to purchase amenities for his workers, as well as bribes for Nazi officials. It appears that in the end, rescuing Jews was more valuable to Schindler than were material gains (Jones, 1998).

In considering the motivational basis underlying Schindler's rescue activities, it seems that personal relationships (allocentric motives) played the greatest role. Schindler lacked the prejudice that inhibited the development of empathy for the suffering of the Jews (Wundheiler, 1986). Thus, when he witnessed extremes of suffering such as Jews being transported by cattle car or the liquidation of the Krakow ghetto he comprehended the extent of the suffering and formulated a prosocial goal (Fogelman, 1994). Schindler's special relationship with Stern and his warm relationships with his Jewish workers puts him in the category of Judeophile (Fogelman, 1994). The fact that Schindler did not evidence a record of service before the war or continue his prosocial activities after the war would be an argument against considering him a moral rescuer (cf. Wundheiler, 1986).

Conclusions

When comparing Schindler and ten Boom as individuals, the contrast could not be greater. Ten Boom was a religious person with close family ties and a life of service. As a person with an intrinsic religious orientation, ten Boom put her humanitarian principles into practice. Schindler was a bon vivant with conflicted family relationships. He appears to have shown little indication of what he would become during the war: a courageous and committed rescuer. Ten Boom is an example of a moral rescuer (axiological motives), while Schindler is comfortably classified as a Judeophile (allocentric motives). Ten Boom worked in a rescue network, while Schindler acted largely on his own. Schindler was not able to maintain his success following the war. He failed at business enterprises and appeared to regain his old sparkle only when in Israel among "his" Jews (Fogelman, 1994). Yet both Schindler and ten Boom used their talents to the utmost as rescuers.

Teaching Exercise

Objectives

- 1.To understand the motivations underlying the activities of individual Holocaust rescuers
- 2.To understand the concept of altruism

Activities

- 1.Choose a rescuer.
- 2.Gather biographical information about the rescuer.
- 3.Analyze the rescuer's motivations.

Table 2: Issues to Consider in Analyzing Altruistic Rescuer Motivations

Motive category	Allocentric	Normocentric	Axiological
Psychological basis	relationships	and social norms and group	situation independent

	<p>cruelty</p> <p>observation of suffering of Jews</p> <p>exposure to Judeophilic Gentiles</p> <p>exposure to empathic and prosocial role models</p>	<p>is to save Jews</p> <p>effective, prosocial leadership</p> <p>group goals in opposition to Nazi aims</p>	<p>(secular or religious)</p> <p>intrinsic religious orientation</p>
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