

Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust

A PORTRAIT OF MORAL COURAGE

In a seminal, early work on rescuers in Nazi-occupied Europe, Phillip Friedman quotes Sholem Asch:

It is of the highest importance, not only to record and recount, both for ourselves and for the future, the evidence of human degradation, but side by side with them, to set forth evidence of human exaltation and nobility. Let the epic of heroic deeds of love, as opposed by those of hatred; of rescue, as opposed to destruction; bear equal witness to the unborn generations.¹

In the early 1960s, Rabbi Harold Schulweis reflected this sentiment when he established the Institute for Righteous Acts,² associated with the Judah L. Magnes Museum in Berkeley, California. Its purpose was to direct research on non-Jewish rescuers of Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe, to conduct empirical studies searching out motivations for rescuers' acts, and to apply the information thus gained to education and the teaching of moral character. This important initial step resulted in several studies of rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust. Perry London was among the first of fifty writers we have identified³ who have concerned themselves with not only gathering stories of bona fide rescuers, but also with explaining their motivations.⁴ My research colleagues and I have examined some sixty-five independent variables reported by these authors to explain the motivations for rescue, and we have classified rescuers into eight simplified categories: 1) moral; 2) religious; 3) empathic; 4) principled/autonomous; 5) situational; 6) personality traits; 7) normative; and 8) other. Some of these will be discussed below.

It is beyond the scope of this examination to evaluate critically the various approaches because methodologies vary substantially. Some studies are empirically based; researchers interviewed rescuers in depth and subjected the data to both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Some authors interpreted existing empirical research. Others used broad philosophical and theological approaches, examining the moral climate in which rescue took place. Still others used a historical approach, using archives and describing the events, places, and accounts of rescue. Here I will summarize our findings on the study of altruistic behavior of righteous Gentiles,⁵ discuss briefly the newly undertaken research on Jewish rescuers,⁶ and briefly suggest

possibilities for cross-cultural research that should be undertaken to better understand altruistic behavior.

Our Research and Its Findings

Our research on altruism began in the late 1970s, when I was invited by Seymour Fromer, director of the Judah L. Magnes Museum, to take over the directorship of the Institute for Righteous Acts. In the early 1980s, the American Jewish Committee asked me to undertake a research project on rescuers of Jews. I accepted both invitations for several reasons. First, I myself was rescued in Poland by a peasant woman who risked her life to save me after the extermination of my entire extended family, along with a thousand other Jews, near Gorlice, Poland. The second major reason was my interest in the concept of altruism as an antidote to human indifference. At that time I had begun to teach a course on the Holocaust and antisemitism at Humboldt State University. The content of this course left the students in a state of despair. I thought that including the deeds of rescuers and their moral courage would offer the students some hope that not all people during World War II were perpetrators, victims, or bystanders to human suffering. As Rabbi Schulweis has noted, "If the Holocaust is our nightmare, the rescuers are our hope." Perhaps their deeds will help capture the moral symmetry of human behavior during those dark years. Furthermore, to understand why righteous Gentiles acted the way they did would help us better understand the nature of altruism.

Our study, undertaken by myself, Pearl Oliner, and other colleagues,⁷ was guided by the following questions: 1) Was rescue primarily a matter of opportunity, that is, external circumstances and situational factors, and if so, what were they? 2) Was rescue primarily a matter of individual character, of personal attributes, and if so, what were those traits, and how and where were they acquired? 3) Was rescue a matter of moral values?⁸ In the course of our study we interviewed more than seven hundred respondents in Poland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Italy, Canada, and the United States. A comparison of rescuers, bystanders, and rescued survivors showed that both rescuers and bystanders had opportunities to rescue, and were equally aware of the plight of Jews. While rescuers took action, bystanders, who had similar knowledge, refrained. We may say that opportunity may have facilitated rescue, but it did not by any means determine it.

Of the many reasons for rescue expressed by our respondents, an overwhelming majority of rescuers, 87 percent, cited at least one ethical or humanitarian consideration in their actions. The ethics cited included justice, that is, the persecution of the innocent could not be justified. The ethic that mattered most, however, was compassion.

Most of the offered help was rooted in a need to assume personal responsibility to relieve suffering and pain. Some rescuers felt a particular affection toward Jews they knew.⁹ Most felt an obligation toward others in general. Pity, compassion, concern, and affection account for 76 percent of the reasons rescuers gave for the help they extended to strangers. More than 90 percent said that they helped at least one stranger as well as a friend. Typical expressions of rescuers were:

When you see a need, you have to help.

Our religion says we are our brother's keepers.

We had to give help to these people in order to save them, not because they were

Jews but because they were persecuted human beings who needed help.

I sensed I had in front of me human beings who were hunted down like wild animals. This aroused a feeling of brotherhood with the desire to help.

I was indignant and aroused against this terrible miscarriage of justice. I couldn't stand by and see innocent people destroyed.

I was always filled with love for everyone, for every creature, for things. I infuse life into every object. For me, everything is alive.

Caring was not a spectator sport. It compelled action. Rescuers assumed responsibility—not because others required them to, but because failure to act meant the abandonment of innocent people. As other rescuers put it:

I couldn't stand by and observe the daily misery that was occurring.

I knew they were taking them and that they wouldn't come back. I didn't think I could live knowing that I could have done something.

Caring attitudes were usually acquired directly from parents. Although parents played a very important role for both rescuers and nonrescuers, significantly more rescuers perceived their parents as benevolent figures.

Values that rescuers learned from their parents also differed significantly from those learned by nonrescuers. Significantly more rescuers made the point that they owed an obligation to all people. We have termed such an orientation "extensivity." The "extensive" predisposition comprises attachment to family in an emotionally healthy way, as well as inclusion of others as deserving of care.¹⁰

They taught me to respect all human beings.

I have learned logical reasoning and also to be tolerant, not to discriminate against people because of their beliefs or social class.

I have learned from my parents' generosity to be open to people. I have learned to be good to one's neighbor, honesty, scruples—to be responsible, concerned, and considerate. To work and care. But also to help, to the point of leaving one's work to help one's neighbor.

My parents taught me discipline, tolerance, and serving other people when they needed something. It was a general feeling. When someone was ill or in need, my parents would always help. We were taught to help in whatever way we could. Consideration and tolerance were very important in our family. My mother and father could both trust those feelings. My father could not judge people who lived or felt differently than he, that point was made to us.

Significantly more rescuers than nonrescuers emphasized learning the value of helping diverse others. More rescuers felt a sense of responsibility, or even an obligation. Nonrescuers felt themselves exempt. They usually were unaffected by the suffering of others, more detached, and less sensitive to other people's helplessness.

The rescuers' feelings may well have resulted from the perception that they shared fundamental similarities with all of humanity, regardless of social status, ethnicity, race, or religion. A significant number had friends from diverse groups.

Childhood discipline also influenced ethical behavior. Rescuers' parents were more likely to have disciplined them by reasoning and explanation of the consequences of their misbehavior than by verbal or physical punishment, which was common among nonrescuers.

While some of these characteristics help explain why rescuers helped Jews, the picture is a bit more complex. Not all rescuers necessarily possessed all of them. Rescuers' motivations differed with respect to interpretations of moral obligation. Our research identified three categories of rescuer motivation, based on theoretical concepts outlined by Janusz Reykowski.¹¹ Those rescuers who entered into rescue activity in response to a strongly valued norm, the expectation of a social group, or the leadership of a highly regarded authority¹² were termed *normocentric*. Rescuers who responded to an external event that aroused or heightened their sense of empathy were considered *empathic*. Rescuers who behaved according to their own overarching principles, mainly autonomously derived, and who were moved to action by external events that they interpreted as violating human principles, were deemed *autonomous/principled*.

For some rescuers, witnessing arrest or persecution of Jews triggered a response based on the norms of the social group with which they identified and to which they normally looked for moral guidance. Normocentric rescuers' motivations arose not from their connection with the victim but from feelings of obligation to the group or community whose implicit and explicit rules they obeyed. For instance, an Italian priest recalled:

A monthly meeting of the clergy used to be held in the seminary. After one of these meetings, Bishop Nicolini took Brunacci aside and showed him a letter from the Secretary of State at the Vatican. This letter called upon all bishops to address themselves to the help of Jews, whose safety was becoming increasingly endangered. This, Bishop Nicolini said, was to be held in the strictest confidence.¹³

Thus for the normocentric rescuer, inaction violated the group's rules of behavior. For these rescuers, feelings of obligation or duty were frequently coupled with anticipation of guilt or shame if they failed to act. The norms of their society, its habits and culture, encouraged helping. In the case of Italian military officials, religious leaders, and diplomats, such norms legitimated sabotage of the deportation of Italian Jews. Approximately 52 percent of our respondents were motivated by obligations that fell into the normocentric category.

Empathic motivation expresses feelings of compassion, sympathy, and pity for the person in distress. Reactions frequently contain both emotional and cognitive elements. The following recollection expresses the empathy that motivated rescuer behavior: "It was unbearable to watch a human being in such a state. When they knocked at our door, we helped them and fed them. Not only them, but others soon came—Jews from Bologna."

Empathic reactions are sometimes overpowering feelings that lead people to react spontaneously. Some rescuers could not withstand the grief of seeing other people's agony. In many such cases the direct face-to-face nature of the encounter heightened the impulse to act. Thirty-eight percent of rescuers indicated that they were moved empathically to their first helping act.

People with an autonomously principled motivation interpreted the persecution of Jews as a violation of their own moral precepts. Unlike normocentric motivation, which prescribed a certain group behavior, autonomously principled motivation involved acting on one's own, without requiring permission or outside validation. Such rescuer behavior reaffirmed and applied the individual's personal principles. Even when the actions of the autonomously principled rescuer proved futile, individuals tended to believe that their principles were kept alive so long as people reaffirmed them by acting on behalf of justice. One Italian rescuer denied that rescuing a great number of people was truly remarkable:

No, no. It was all something very simple. Nothing grandiose was done. It was done simply without considering risk, without thinking about whether it would be an occasion for recognition or to be maligned, it was in effect done out of innocence. I didn't think I was doing anything other than what should be done, or that I was in any special danger because of what I was doing. Justice had to be done. Persecution of the innocents was unacceptable.

Autonomously motivated rescuers felt fundamentally challenged by the abuses they were observing—letting such acts occur was tantamount to condoning them. But only a small minority of rescuers—approximately 11 percent—fell into this category.

These three ideal types are seldom found in any individual case. Elements of empathy were sometimes associated with normocentric considerations, and principled behavior was not necessarily devoid of normocentric or empathic motivating influences. Self-enhancement and fulfillment of personal needs also appeared in several cases. One rescuer, for example, who learned that the women living with her were Jewish, later said that she was reluctant to ask them to leave since her relationship with them was the only affectionate one she had.

Scholars such as Yahil, Zuccotti, A. Ramati, Carpy, Chary, Flender, Friedman, and L. Baron, among others, have addressed the climate in which the rescue of Jews was more likely, usually where social, cultural, and political conditions were conducive to it, or antisemitism was less rampant.¹⁴ Such a climate permitted the rescue, in October 1943, of almost the entire Danish Jewish population, approximately 92 percent, since they could be smuggled into Sweden. The fact that 85 percent of the Jewish population of Italy was rescued is attributed to the general lack of antisemitism and the absence of a sharply drawn distinction between Jews and other Italians.

A variety of explanations for Jewish rescue have been put forward, and many of them are similar. Thus Fleischner concludes that one of the major factors in rescue was compassion for the Jewish victims, as do Kurek, Huneke, Oliner and Oliner, and Tec (1986).¹⁵ Other researchers find that Christian charity or other religious factors help explain rescue, among them Baron, Sauvage, Huneke, Fleischner, Zeitoun, and the Oliners in their latest analysis. Sauvage, Hallie, Fleischner, Kurek, Huneke,

Oliner and Oliner, London, Tec, and Fogelman found that a less specified religious morality underlay the rescue of Jews.¹⁶

While none of the more than fifty studies of rescue have arrived at a single reason for rescue, nearly all concur that such motivation is most often associated with a particular type of socialization experience and moral climate in which ethical behavior was molded by a significant other, such as a parent. This may help account for the frequently reiterated statements made by rescuers that helping Jews was simply the moral thing to do.

Rescuers were more likely to have an extensive orientation than nonrescuers. They attached themselves to others more readily in responsible relationships and were more likely to do so inclusively. They were more likely to feel closer to their family of origin and to have been taught ethical obligations to others. Rescuers were more likely to feel compassion for suffering and to try to relieve it.

They were more likely to endorse pluralistic and democratic values, to reject ethnocentric stereotypes, and to have had friends from different social and religious groups in their youth. Rescuers were able to identify with people from different social, ethnic, national, and religious backgrounds.

They felt that they possessed personal integrity—that is, they were more likely to perceive themselves as honest and helpful, able to take responsibility, and willing to stand up for their beliefs. Of course they were less inclined to respect unquestioned obedience to authority. By contrast, nonrescuers tended to consider others outside their immediate community as largely peripheral. They were more concerned with their own needs and their own survival. Many paid scant attention to others' troubles. At best their obligation extended to a small circle, from which strangers were excluded.

Jewish Rescuers

While the world should know and record the deeds of those like Herman Graebe, Raoul Wallenberg, Aristide Mendez, Georgio Perlasca, Madam Trocmé, and thousands of others who are less famous rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust, further research is required on Jewish rescuers of Jews.¹⁷ In this regard, Nechama Tec's seminal work *In the Lion's Den* is a welcome trailblazer. But we need more individual narratives of heroic Jewish rescuers; hopefully, they will be recorded while these individuals are still alive. By Jewish rescuers, we mean Jewish individuals or groups who actually hid, rescued, or transported other Jews to safety. We know that Jews were among the partisans and in resistance and fighting movements in virtually every country under Nazi occupation.¹⁸ Historical accuracy demands that we dispel the falsehood that Jews walked like sheep to the slaughterhouse.

Holocaust historian Lucy S. Dawidowicz has said, "We look at the past through the prism of the present and try to discern the future."¹⁹ A historical myth is a distortion of that prism that is exploited in support of present policies. The image of European Jews passively accepting their fate is one of the most powerful myths of World War II. Historical myths exist because they serve a purpose. The myth of Jewish passivity has served many purposes. To antisemites it has provided proof of the lack of Jewish character, reinforcing the historic stereotype of the passive,

cowardly Jew. To the Allies who refused to intervene to halt the extermination of Jews, the myth has served to mitigate guilt; if the Jews themselves were passive, were we really to blame for not intervening?

Faced with the determination of the Third Reich to exterminate them, the European Jews had three behavioral options. First, they could collaborate fully with the Nazis in the hope that by doing so, they could save themselves. Second, they could adopt what Lawrence Baron has called "defensive acquiescence,"²⁰ hoping that by complying with all Nazi requests, the Nazis would exempt them from destruction. Third, they could choose to resist. The definition of resistance is crucial to understanding Jewish behavior. Raul Hilberg considers resistance to mean only the use of arms.²¹ Yehuda Bauer's definition is broader, including "all active and conscious organized action against the Nazi command's policies, or wishes, by whatever means: social organization, morale-building operations, underground political work, active unarmed resistance or, finally, armed resistance."²² Reuben Ainsztein divides resistance into four types: partisan activities, revolts and underground activities in ghettos, revolts and underground activities in camps, and actions in defense of lives and human dignity.²³

Resistance for anyone was difficult in the Third Reich, but it was doubly so for Jews, who were scattered among a largely indifferent and frequently hostile Gentile population. The obstacles seemed insurmountable.²⁴ And yet, many Jews resisted: they fought those who tried to round them up, they escaped to the forests to join the partisans, they revolted in camps and ghettos, they engaged in sabotage, they hid.²⁵

Regardless of the particular form resistance took, success was determined by three factors. First, the character and skills of the individuals played a crucial role. Individuals who were assimilated into non-Jewish culture had a better chance of "passing" as Aryan. Courage, the ability to adapt to unforeseen circumstances, physical appearance, and language skills all helped. Second, social environment—that is, the historical attitude of the local population toward Jews—could spell the difference between survival and death. Surviving without assistance from the non-Jewish population was next to impossible. Thus, while 15 percent of Italian Jews lost their lives, the figure is 90 percent for Poland, which had a long tradition of antisemitism and experienced the harsh conditions of German occupation.²⁶ Jews who attempted to join partisan units were much more successful in the occupied USSR than in occupied Poland. Third, the physical environment also played a role: those who escaped to the forests of Byelorussia had a better chance than those fleeing on the open steppes of Ukraine.

The story of Wilhelm Bachner is an example of the fourth type of resistance described by Ainsztein: the defense of lives and dignity.²⁷ Bachner saved over fifty persons from the Jewish ghettos of Poland, many of whom survived the war. He did it armed only with his skill, courage, and intelligence.

Wilhelm Bachner was born on September 17, 1912, in the Polish town of Bielsko (German Bielitz). Long a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bielsko was culturally German, joining Poland only after World War I. Bachner's surname reflected this German heritage as did the fact that he grew up speaking German. Bachner studied engineering in Brno, Czechoslovakia, graduating in 1938. After a short stay in his

native city, he went to work in Warsaw in the spring of 1939 and soon married. By then the ghetto had been established.

Hungry and afraid, Bachner slipped out of the ghetto and applied for a position as an engineer with a local German architectural firm that had recently opened an office in Warsaw. He impressed the firm's owner, Johannes Kellner, and before long Bachner was supervising over eight hundred people. He sneaked out over fifty Jews from various ghettos, including his wife—who had to become his “mistress”—and other members of his family and hired them for the firm. The Kellner Firm was under contract with the German railroad (Deutsche Reichsbahn) and was provided with a construction shop on rails (*Bauzug*) that carried its own tools, supplies, food, and sleeping quarters for railroad work crews. Their task was to rebuild destroyed bridges, rail lines, barracks, and railroad stations. Soon after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, Bachner convinced Kellner to open branches in different parts of newly conquered Eastern Europe, most importantly in Kiev. In Kiev Bachner obtained a house, which he converted to a safehouse for Jews he rescued from the Warsaw and Kraków ghettos with the help of his trusted, non-Jewish friend Kazaniecki.

Careful planning and anticipatory action deflected suspicion from Bachner and those Jews he hired as part of the work crews. All of those people were given false identity papers and worked alongside the 750 Poles and Ukrainians under Bachner's supervision. In this manner fifty Jews survived the war on the Eastern Front until Bachner surrendered himself and his crew to the American forces in Germany in 1945.

How and why was this modest man, as well as several of his rescued survivors, able to accomplish this feat? Wilhelm Bachner's success in eluding discovery was due to a complex combination of innate and acquired qualities. For Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe, survival was as much a matter of chance as of skill and environment. Recounting the story of his many brushes with death, Bachner admitted, “If I go through my whole story, it looks like God in heaven had nothing else to do, only to look after Bill Bachner with all his family and with all the Jewish friends he saved.”²⁸

But growing up in Bielsko meant that he absorbed German culture. He learned Polish as a second language. Bachner's socialization into German culture also gave him a German outlook: “I was used to organizing everything in a perfect, German way,” he said, “which was very appreciated by the Germans who were guarding or supervising us.”²⁹ Appearance helped. Though slight in stature, the photo on Bachner's work permit shows a handsome, dark-haired man with a neat mustache. Had Bachner been born with obvious Jewish features, speaking German like Goethe could not have saved him. Dressed in a black leather jacket and boots, discussing construction plans in elegant German, Bachner's Jewish identity was never suspected.

Fast thinking and sheer pluck played a role. In September 1942, shortly after Bachner had brought the last of his people from the Warsaw Ghetto to Kiev, he found himself facing the Gestapo, who, alerted by an informer, showed up at his office, guns drawn, accusing him of hiding Jews. A Jewish crew member, Hania Shane, whom he saved, recalled the incident: “Willie, very calm, was yelling back at them, ‘How dare you say this; if you are so sure, why don't you go find them yourselves.’ While he was

arguing with them and prolonging the heated discussion, my friend Heniek left the office and went to the train station where his crew was working and quietly dispersed the Jewish workers just in case."³⁰

But it was character, courage, and his values that motivated Bachner to act. When asked what motivated him to risk his life to rescue others besides his immediate family, Bachner said, "I did it to show—if you are nice to people, God maybe will be nice to you." Bachner's cousin describes their grandmother telling them all that they had the responsibility to do good, and that they would receive their reward in heaven. Bachner himself demonstrated caring for others even after World War II, when he was deeply involved with those whom he had rescued, and even his German boss, Kellner, who only then learned that Bachner and many members of his crew were Jews.

Other Rescuers

We suggest that there is a need to expand the scope of research to prosocial behavior in other contexts and societies. We need to look at diverse types of rescue in contexts where social norms approve the behavior, in contrast to those contexts where it involves acting against prevailing norms. Research needs to collect accounts such as that of Christian Fetteroff, who was stabbed while rescuing a woman who was being mugged in a New York subway. In the hospital, Feteroff explained to a reporter, "What I did makes me a human being. I helped someone who needed help. It wasn't heroic. Until now, I didn't know that everybody wouldn't act the same way."³¹

Since April 15, 1905, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission has awarded medals and monetary rewards to 7,744 individuals who risked their lives to save individuals who were in great danger. Among the awardees, 8.8 percent were females and 91.2 percent were males, of whom 1,584 (20 percent), received their medals posthumously. Criteria for the award include conclusive evidence that the person risked his or her life in saving, or attempting to save, the life of another person, and the absence of any full measure of responsibility between the rescuer and the rescued (i.e., one doesn't get a reward for rescuing a family member). According to Walter F. Rutkowski, Executive Vice President of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, in the fifteen years of his directorship, no systematic research has been done on the Carnegie heroes. This is clearly a fertile area for exploration.

Further research also needs to be done on heroic rescuers who acted in other hostile or disapproving settings, such as the Turkish rescuers of Armenians during the 1915 genocide,³² and Kuwaiti rescuers of Palestinians after the Gulf War (1991–1992). More work needs to be done on conventional altruists such as hospice volunteers,³³ as well as on inclusively oriented moral communities such as the Bahá'ís,³⁴ in order to help us better understand goodness, how it comes about, and how it can be fostered. All of the above suggestions could, in our view, shed more light on the nature of altruism and its relationship to rescue and prosocial behavior.

Half a century after the events of the Holocaust, what can we learn from studying rescuers of Jews during World War II? First, acts of heroic altruism are not the province of larger-than-life figures. Rather, they are the *deeds of ordinary people* whose moral courage arises out of the routine ways they live their daily lives—their ways

of feeling, their perceptions of what authority should be obeyed, and the models of conduct they learned from parents, friends, or religious instruction.

If we are to empower people to intervene actively in the presence of destructive social forces, then social institutions must also assume that obligation. Schools, clubs, religious institutions, the workplace, and the community in general, should share in the inculcation of moral values, especially in extensive, inclusive orientation. Schools need to rework curricula to include prosocial education as a basic competency along with reading, writing, and arithmetic. They should inculcate not only the obligation to act on behalf of others, they should also explain the consequences of indifference. Rescuers, both Gentile and Jewish, need to appear in the history books as moral heroes who made a difference, thus perhaps correcting the distorted image of humanity brought about by Nazi genocide.

These institutions will need to appeal to the intellect, emotions, and to group norms, emphasizing the obligation not only to the immediate community but to those outside it as well. Such institutions will have to recognize that bonds among people are often created through the experience of caring. Hence, they will need to become caring institutions, especially insofar as they teach the young.

Institutions must be linked to the larger community in an ecological web that facilitates understanding of and promotes universal ethical norms. Such an approach challenges Western thinking, which has traditionally venerated the autonomous individual guided by rationality. But neither autonomous thought nor rationality can guarantee moral virtue. The same, of course, may be said of emotional reactions and empathy, or group norms. The road to virtue is not single but multiple; and we need to study all its paths. Rescuers responded to Jews because to do so confirmed and supported the values of the social group with which they identified most closely. The lonely embattled hero confronting the mob deserves our admiration, but he or she is a rarity. For most people, moral behavior is the consequence of empathy, caring for others, and strong attachment to moral communities that embrace ethical obligations as universally binding.

Should our social institutions fail to acknowledge this they will fail to empower ordinary people with the spirit of altruism. Our need to respond to both local and global concerns in the spirit of altruism is urgent. The concept of the "global village" implies not only the sharing of a single environment but of a single moral community. More than a century ago Emile Durkheim observed that rather than being an "agreeable ornament of social life," altruism is essential for the survival of any society. What Durkheim failed to emphasize, however, and what the research on rescuers demonstrates, is that benefit accrues not only to society as a whole but also to the participants in it. Reaching out to others can be enormously gratifying, persuading the actors to believe in their own potency, their skills, and above all, their humanity. To understand compassion, we need to look at examples of helping in other contexts and cultures, both synchronically, and diachronically. Harold Schulweis has remarked that "goodness is rare but sacred in history; it must not be neglected." To research and understand goodness would prove a valuable legacy for our children.

NOTES

1. P. Friedman, *Their Brother's Keepers* (New York: Crown, 1957).
2. Initially I was involved very briefly with the Institute for Righteous Acts, introducing Professor Frederick Terrien, a sociologist from San Francisco State, to assist Rabbi Schulweis, who served on the first advisory board. Among the first directors were Mrs. Neil Smelser and Perry London. In 1978, I became director of the Institute.
3. See the bibliography in S. P. Oliner and P. M. Oliner, *The Altruistic Personality: Rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe* (New York: Free Press, 1988), p. 419.
4. Because of the variety of approaches used, meta-analysis of the books and articles of some of these authors in order to arrive at common independent variables explaining motivation proved unfeasible.
5. Altruism is devotion to the welfare of others. Specifically, altruism 1) is directed toward helping others; 2) involves high risk or sacrifice for the actor; 3) is not accompanied by external reward; and 4) is voluntary. Rescuers in the context of the Holocaust meet these criteria.
6. See the recently published book by Samuel P. Oliner and Kathleen Lee, *Who Shall Live: The Wilhelm Bachner Story* (Chicago: Academy Chicago, 1996).
7. See Oliner and Oliner, *Altruistic Personality*, for details on other researchers and methodologies.
8. By values we mean the enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct and/or states of existence. Another definition is the collective conception of what is considered good, desirable, and proper, or bad, undesirable, and improper, in a culture. Schulman and Mekler define moral values as consisting of empathy, kindness, and responsibility. See M. Schulman and E. Mekler, *Bringing Up a Moral Child* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1985).
9. N. Tec, E. Fogelman, L. Baron, D. Huneke, and others, have reported similar findings.
10. On moral heroism and the concept of extensivity, see Oliner and Oliner, *Altruistic Personality*, pp. 249–60.
11. On empathic, normocentric, and principled motivations, see *ibid.*, p. 188; J. Reykowski, "Dimensions of Development in Moral Values: Two Approaches to the Development of Morality," in *Social and Moral Values: Individual and Societal Perspectives*, ed. N. Eisenberg, J. Reykowski, and E. Staub (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1987).
12. As in Denmark, Italy, and Bulgaria, where there were national efforts to rescue Jewish citizens.
13. This chapter includes a variety of rescuers' comments that originally appeared in Oliner and Oliner, *Altruistic Personality*. The identities of the rescuers remain confidential.
14. L. Yahil, *The Rescue of Danish Jewry: Test of a Democracy* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1969); S. Zuccotti, *The Italians and the Holocaust: Persecution, Rescue, and Survival* (New York: Basic Books, 1987); *idem*, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1993); A. Ramati, *The Assisi Underground: The Priests Who Rescued the Jews* (New York: Stein and Day, 1978); D. Carpi, "The Rescue of Jews in the Italian Zone of Occupied Croatia," in *Rescue Attempts during the Holocaust: Proceedings of the Second Yad Veshem International Historical Conference*, ed. Y. Gutman and E. Zuroff (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1974), pp. 465–525; F. B. Chary, *The Bulgarian Jews and the Final Solution, 1940–1944* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972); H. Flender, *Rescue in Denmark* (New York: Manor, 1964); P. Friedman, *Their Brothers' Keepers: The Christian Heroes and Heroines Who Helped the Oppressed Escape the Nazi Terror* (New York: Crown, 1957); L. Baron, "The Historical Context of Rescue," in Oliner and Oliner, *Altruistic Personality*.
15. See, for example, E. Fleischner, *Remembering for the Future, Theme 1: Jews and Christians during and after the Holocaust*, International Scholars Conference, Oxford, July 10–13 (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1988), pp. 233–47; E. Kurek, "The Role of Polish Nuns in the Rescue of Jews, 1939–1945," in *Embracing the Other: Philosophical, Psychological, and Histori-*

cal Perspectives on Altruism, ed. S. P. Oliner, P. M. Oliner et al. (New York: New York University Press, 1992), pp. 328–33; D. K. Huneke, "The Lesson of Herman Graebes' Life: The Origins of a Moral Person," *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 13/1–2 (1986): 320–31; Oliner and Oliner, *Altruistic Personality*; N. Tec, *When Light Pierced the Darkness: Christian Rescue of Jews in Nazi-Occupied Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

16. L. Baron, "The Moral Minority: A Review of Psycho-Social Research on the Righteous Gentiles," in *Forty-Five Years After: What Have We Learned about the Holocaust*, ed. A. Berger, F. Littell, and H. Locke (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellin, 1993); P. Sauvage, "Ten Things I Would Like to Know about Righteous Conduct in Le Chambon and Elsewhere during the Holocaust," *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 13/1–2 (1986): 252–59; D. K. Huneke, "The Lessons of Herman Graebes' Life: The Origins of a Moral Person," *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 13/1–2 (1986); S. Zeitoun, "The Role of Christian Community in Saving Jewish Children in France during the Second World War," in *Remembering for the Future: The Impact of the Holocaust and Genocide on Jews and Christians*, ed. E. Fleischner, supplementary volume (Oxford: Pergamon, 1988), pp. 505–25; Oliner and Oliner, *Altruistic Personality*; P. Haille, *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed: The Story of Le Chambon and How Goodness Happened There* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979); Kurek, "Role of Polish Nuns," pp. 328–33; S. P. Oliner and P. M. Oliner, "Righteous People in the Holocaust" in *Genocide: A Critical Bibliographic Review*, ed. I. W. Charney (London: Mansell, 1991), pp. 363–85; P. London, "The Rescuers: Motivational Hypotheses about Christians Who Save Jews from the Nazis," in *Altruism and Helping Behavior*, ed. J. Macauley and L. Berkowitz (New York: Academic Press, 1970), pp. 241–65; Tec, *When Light Pierced the Darkness*; E. Fogelman, *The Rescuers: A Socio-Psychological Study of Altruistic Behavior during the Nazi Era* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1987).

17. See Oliner and Lee, *Who Shall Live*.

18. R. Ainsztein, *Jewish Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Eastern Europe* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1974); N. Tec, *In the Lion's Den: The Life of Oswald Rufeisen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); L. Baron, "The Historical Context of Rescue," in Oliner and Oliner, *Altruistic Personality*; M. Berenbaum, *The World Must Know: The History of the Holocaust Told in the United States Holocaust Museum* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1993); H. Smolar, *Resistance in Minsk*, trans. H. J. Lewbin (Oakland: Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum, 1966). There are several dozen books and articles about resistance in various parts of Europe. Only a few institutions in the United States, Israel, and Germany were helpful in providing the names of Jewish rescuers: the Moreshet Archives in Israel, the Vidal Sassoon International Center, The Tel Aviv University Wiener Library, Bet Lohamei Haghettaot Ghetto Fighters, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, the Fortunoff Video Archives for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University, the Technische Universität in Berlin, and the St. Louis Center for Holocaust Studies. In all of these cases only detailed searches can reveal the names of the Jewish rescuers.

19. L. S. Dawidowicz, *The War against the Jews: 1933–1945* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1975), p. 341.

20. Baron, "Historical Context of Rescue," p. 35.

21. Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York: Watts [New Viewpoints], 1973), pp. 660–68.

22. Yehuda Bauer, "Jewish Leadership Reactions to Nazi Policies," in *The Holocaust as Historical Experience*, ed. Y. Bauer and N. Rotenstreich (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1981), pp. 173–74.

23. Ainsztein, *Jewish Resistance*, p. xxvii.

24. Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* (New York: Watts, 1982), p. 247.

25. Berenbaum, *The World Must Know*; Tec, *In the Lion's Den*; J. Semelin, *Unarmed against Hitler: Civilian Resistance in France 1939–1943*, trans. S. Hussert-Kapit (Westport, CN: Praeger, 1993); M. Barkai, ed., *The Fighting Ghettos* (New York: Tower Books, 1962); Smolar, *Resistance in Minsk*.

26. Baron, "Historical Context of Rescue," pp. 25, 44.

27. In 1982 I interviewed Wilhelm Bachner as a rescued survivor. To my surprise we

found him to be a Jewish rescuer. P. M. Oliner and I decided then that when we finished *The Altruistic Personality* we would undertake research on Jewish rescuers, which we began in 1991.

28. Bachner interview, July 1982.

29. Ibid.

30. Hania Shane interview, 1993.

31. "Subway Hero Downplays Bravery," *New York Times*, May 18, 1993.

32. R. Hovannisian has begun recording Turkish rescues of Armenians during the genocide of 1915. He maintains more needs to be done. His findings are published in *Embracing the Other*, ed. Oliner and Oliner, pp. 282–304.

33. Kathleen Lee and I have recently completed a study entitled *Conventional Altruism: Hospice Volunteers* (in press). See also T. Root, *Atomism versus Social Solidarity: A Comparison of Volunteer Workers in Charities and Politics, and Non-Volunteers, with Reference to Tolerance of Ambiguity*, unpublished masters thesis, University of East London, 1993; and N. Allen and P. Rushton, "Personality Characteristics of Community Mental Health Volunteers: A Review," *Journal of Voluntary Action Research* 12/1 (January–March 1993): 36–49.

34. See W. Heller and H. Mahmoudi, "Altruism and Extensivity in the Bahá'í Religion," in *Embracing the Other*, ed. Oliner and Oliner, pp. 282–304.