Food Acquisition Strategies within Theresienstadt Ghetto: An Analysis of Oral Testimonies

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Abstract

Objective: To determine how individuals deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto between 1942 and 1945 acquired additional foods and perceived levels of hunger during their time in the ghetto.

Design: Using a grounded theory approach, oral testimonies of survivors of the Theresienstadt ghetto were viewed through the USC Shoah Foundation. An interview analysis guide was created in order to collect data, and key remarks made by interviewees were transcribed verbatim. Demographic data was also collected. Information was then entered in to *QuestionPro* for further analysis.

Subjects: Interviewees (n=14) were from Czechoslovakia (64%), Germany (21%), Austria (7%), and Holland (7%). The sample was proportionately male and female, aged 20.2±5.7years (M±SD) at time of deportation to Theresienstadt. The majority of interviewees arrived in 1942 (64%), while the others arrived in 1943 (21%) and 1944 (14%). All subjects participated in labor during their time in Theresienstadt.

Results: Survivors reported acquiring additional foods mainly through stealing, receiving extra servings during distribution, and bartering. The main two items smuggled, according to interviewees, were potatoes and bread. Acquiring fresh produce, generally from outside of the ghetto during labor, was frequently reported as a delicacy. Sharing with family and friends was common. Factors such as older age and lack of labor assignment depleted access to additional food outside of one's daily ration.

Conclusions: Labor was the key in determining which inmates of Theresienstadt were able to acquire additional foods outside of their set ration. While the majority of survivors stated feelings of hunger during their time in the ghetto, the majority of survivors noted that the older population of the ghetto, that did not participate in labor, faced far worse cases of starvation.

Background

Food is integral to a person's sense of self, as eating provides far beyond simply providing fuel for the body. Eating patterns frequently reflect a person's family, culture, and environment (Brisman, 2008). Access to a to a variety of nutrient-dense foods is frequently linked with power, socioeconomic status, health status, surrounding political climate, and other environmental influences (Brisman, 2008). Food, and lack thereof, shapes how individuals and populations work and interact. Food shortages provide a way to explore power relations within a population, especially within a controlled and confined population (Brisman, 2008). For example, response to hunger was a large determinant of health for inmates of Theresienstadt, a ghetto used to separate Jews from the rest of the region during World War II (Spies, 1997). Examining food practices within Theresienstadt helps scholars to better understand life within ghettos; further, examining how survivors responded to the unjust system of food distribution within the ghetto reveals how populations work to survive in times of food shortages (Tonsmeyer, Haslinger, & Laba, 2019).

Existing research and papers on life in Theresienstadt between 1941 and 1945 have extensively highlighted the entertainment, culture, and education side of Theresienstadt, further playing to Nazi Germany's efforts to cover up the harsh realities of living conditions (Silva, 1996). Researching the true experience of Jews during the Holocaust shifts the conversation from one that is focused merely on the unjust actions of the oppressors to a conversation that is centered around the resilience of the oppressed. With this idea in mind, there is a lack in clear understanding of how different groups within the ghetto responded to food shortages and the strategies inmates used to acquire additional foods. Moreover, the use of oral testimonies has

scarcely been used to acquire information regarding public health components of the Theresienstadt ghetto, specifically hunger and food acquisition patterns.

This is the first study, to the researcher's knowledge, to use solely oral testimonies and a qualitative research approach to explore and understand the perceptions of hunger and food acquisition practices of Theresienstadt ghetto survivors. Survivors provide unique perspectives on the issue, allowing for primary themes of survivorship to be identified; further, analyzing the testimonies helps us to deduce general patterns of life that are adapted in times of extreme circumstances (Cave, 2014). The adaptive strategies described by survivors, specifically surrounding food acquisition, introduce us to overarching themes that can help us in current and future humanity crises. The aim of this study is to 1) gain understanding of perceptions and factors related to hunger within the Theresienstadt ghetto and 2) explore how participation in labor in and outside of the ghetto played a role in acquiring additional foods. The results of this research study shape how food acquisition within Theresienstadt is understood and enhance current food policies and practices designed for persons currently suffering from food shortages and/or displacement. Understanding food practices in confinement equips public health professionals with the needed information to best implement humanitarian aid to those in need today.

Methodology

Sample

The sample used in the study was identified through use of the USC Shoah Foundation Testimonies. The USC Shoah Foundation contains approximately 52,000 interviews with Holocaust survivors and witnesses (Visual History Archive). Interviews as part of the USC

Shoah Foundation were conducted, in the interviewee's preferred language, between the years 1994 and 2002. The interviews generally consist of the survivor or witness describing their background, their experiences during World War II, and their lives after the war. Additionally, many interviews include artifacts and still photographs at the end.

The structure of the interview process was as follows (Collecting Testimonies):

1. One week prior to interview date, survivor met with interviewer to complete a form focused on biographical information. Interviewer also explained the upcoming interview's structure, which helped the interviewer start thinking about what he/she wanted to say. An indirect outcome of the pre-interview meeting was increased rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee.
2. On day of interview, the interviewee read and signed release forms. Interviews were then conducted, mostly at the interviewee's home, in the language of interviewee's choice.

The interview methodology was created in collaboration with Holocaust historians, psychologists, and oral history experts. Guidelines were set in place for both the videographer and the interviewer to ensure consistency. Questions asked during the interview by the interviewer were generally semi-structured, with the interviewer initiating topics followed by interviewee discussing his/her experiences in-depth.

Indexing terms were added to each oral testimony by the USC Shoah Foundation to allow searchability and encourage use of the testimonies (Cataloguing and Indexing). From a vocabulary of about 65,000 words, indexing terms were applied to describe each one-minute segment of the interview. For this study, the researcher used the indexing terms to narrow the

videos down to those that included information on food acquisition within Theresienstadt. For the purpose of this study, interviews analyzed used met the following criteria:

- Interview conducted in English
- Spent time in Theresienstadt between the years 1941 and 1945
- Mentioned hunger and/or food acquisition during interview (based on indexing terms) two or more times.

A total of 14 interviews from the USC Shoah Foundation met the study's criteria and were used in the study.

Data Collection

A grounded theory approach to data collection and analysis was taken, as it best aligned with the aims of the research. Such an approach enabled the researcher to analyze oral testimonies enables the researcher to analyze how survivors remember and describe the experiences surrounding food within the Theresienstadt ghetto. However, inconsistent with classic grounded theory research, interviews had already occurred through the USC Shoah Foundation; therefore, the researcher was not in control of questions asked (Grounded Theory, 2008). To ensure consistency in analysis, an Interview Analysis Guide (Appendix A) was created and used to record information gathered during each interview. The specific aims of each question asked are highlighted in Appendix B.

In addition to including the segment number in each question's answer, key quotes were transcribed verbatim at the researcher's discretion. Quotes were placed in each relevant text box from the guide.

Data collection took place between January 2019 and April 2019. Interviews were watched through all biographical information segments and until the last segment indexed for

Theresienstadt. This ensured that the researcher understood the surrounding context of all that was mentioned in interviews and picked up on any forgotten details that the interviewee mentioned later during the interview.

Data Analysis and Management

Analysis was based on a grounded theory approach to ensure that major themes were supported by strong data. The Interview Analysis Guide was used to collect data for all fourteen interviews. The first three testimonies were open coded by section within the Interview Analysis Guide, and the open codes were then grouped into major themes. After verifying the themes with the transcripts, the researcher used these axial codes to generate the first rendition of a codebook. The codebook was modified and expanded upon throughout the data analysis process. It is important to also note that multiple codes could be applied to a single section of the Interview Analysis Guide.

Additionally, an Excel Spreadsheet was created to compile basic information and codes from all interviews. The spreadsheet allowed for the identification of general themes as data collection progressed. Information included was the following

- Shoah ID number
- Origin Country
- Years Spent in Theresienstadt (where deported to, if applicable)
- Age when Transported
- Implied Socioeconomic Status
- Ghetto Occupation (self)
- Ghetto Occupation (relevant family and friends, also stated as their “network”)
- Food Acquisition Strategies Codes

- Stated Foods Acquired through Acquisition Strategies
- Living Quarters Access to Cooking
- Perception of Self's Hunger Levels
- Perception of Older Adults' Hunger Levels

Information from the Excel Spreadsheet was then transferred to *QuestionPro* for analysis. Each interview form, along with all analysis documents, were saved on the researcher's laptop using the SHOAH ID number.

Results

Sample Demographics

The final sample consisted of 14 interviews, as expected. The sample was proportionately male and female, aged 20.2±5.7years (M±SD) at time of deportation to Theresienstadt, and primarily from Czechoslovakia (64%). Other countries of origin included Germany (21%), Austria (7%), and Holland (7%). 50% of interviewees were 18 or younger at time of deportation, with the oldest being 34 years old and the youngest being 14 years old. The majority of interviewees arrived in 1942 (64%), with the others arriving in 1943 (21%) and 1944 (14%). 100% of interviewees reported receiving labor-level rations, as 100% of interviewees participated in labor during their time in Theresienstadt. 12 different types of labor assignments were mentioned as jobs that interviewees participated in. 43% of interviewees were in Theresienstadt until the ghetto's liberation in May 1945. Others were deported in 1944 to Auschwitz II-Birkenau (75%) and Zossen-Wulkow bei Trebnitz (25%). A further description of the sample's demographics can be found in Appendix C.

Findings

9 major strategies were mentioned as means to acquire additional food. A further description of the strategies identified can be found in Appendix D. Bread and potatoes were identified as the food items stolen most. Other food items mentioned by survivors included produce (spinach, rhubarb, tomatoes, beets, cucumbers, lemons, berries), eggs meats, and canned goods.

Primary Themes

Four primary themes were identified from the oral testimonies including *additional ration acquired through hard labor, stealing, resource exchanging, making it work, and emotional response to perceived hunger levels*. Appendix E brings all four themes and their sub-themes together into a conceptual framework, which depicts the relationship between major themes and outcomes. Themes and the conceptual framework are described in detail in the following sections.

Additional Ration Acquired through Hard Labor

As noted in previous literature, a general theme within Theresienstadt was that the harder you worked, the more food you received through rations. Survivors described the ration as enough to live and work:

> *"I will say that where it wasn't the greatest, they fed us, it kept us alive. They expected a certain amount of labor out of us, so they had to give us at least enough so that we could perform."* – Werner Loeb (Loeb, 1998)

Stealing

Three major forms of stealing were identified from the oral testimonies. Survivors indicated that they, along with any other members of their network who took part in labor, procured

most of their smuggled food from their labor environments. Other sources of smuggled foods included from within the ghetto and during times of ghetto food distribution. All additional routes were described as vital to surviving the time period.

Labor stealing

All interviewees participated in labor during their time in the ghetto, which not only granted them larger food rations, but also provided a location that food could be smuggled from. Interviewees referred to certain jobs as ideal for smuggling foods. A kitchen job was described as one of the ideal labor assignments:

> *"To be in the kitchen that meant a fortune because of stealing and smuggling and so on."* – Georges Novak (Novak, 2009)

Sorting through new arrival's personal belongings for the Germans was known as a desired job. This was because the position granted inmates access to additional food:

> *"We had to empty and sort out food. First of all, we had to look for diamonds and for anything valuable. We were allowed to take the food, so can you imagine what a job there was?"* – Sarra Tucker (Tucker, 1996)

Working in the bakery also provided the opportunity to get extra bread, which was one of the more common additional foods acquired by inmates. Having such a job was viewed as good fortune, as it raised the chances of surviving the harsh conditions of the ghetto:

> *"We were really lucky. My mother was assigned to bring bread. They were cutting the bread for portion. So, sometimes, not much, she brought sometimes a small piece that fell down or so. That helped us a lot."* – Gerta Slezak (Slezak, 2000)

Having jobs outside of the ghetto allowed for inmates to smuggle food in from fields during their labor. The ability to do so was viewed as a great privilege, as other inmates were typically trapped in the ghetto and therefore, could not smuggle food in:

> *"So, we had some instrument that we could take the apples down and stash them in our little bag which we had. And then we had some fresh apples. As I said before, I think we were the only 10 people in the whole ghetto of Theresienstadt who at that time had fresh fruit."* – Hermann Hirschfeld (Hirschfeld, 1993)

> *"Red beets put in big pile and covered with straw for winter. And we also had to take care of chickens to collect eggs… that's why I also stole eggs. I made one hole on each end and sucked it in. And that kept me well nourished."* – Georges Novak (Novak, 2009)

Many interviewees also discussed the ethics behind stealing foods and how they were able to steal food without feelings of guilt. During their time in the ghetto, many were able to justify the idea of stealing food by determining that such stealing was necessary in order to survive:

> *"You know, we talk now about stealing. When I say steal it sounds so harsh, but that was the survival."* – Sasha Erlik (Erlik, 1995)

Other interviewers introduced the idea that their acts of stealing did not negatively impact anyone, as the food stolen would be replaced and still distributed throughout the ghetto:

> *"We had to work to unload a train of potatoes… You see if you took from the whole thing, I didn't feel I was cheating anyone, because if they were gone, a whole train load, then there would be new potatoes. I didn't take it from anybody personally."* – Hanna Lederer (Lederer, 1996)

According to many, there was a universal understanding of what was free to steal and what was not. This further allowed them to justify stealing food:

"One thing that you learned in the concentration camp [Theresienstadt], its morally justifiable I suppose… you didn't steal from your mate, your friend your family… but anything common, that was free go." –Kurt Blecher (Blecher, 1995)

Contributing to the family through stealing

Many survivors also discussed how their personal network was able to help provide them additional food:

"*My younger brother was more fortunate. He managed to get a job in the kitchen. That means that he ate better than the rest of us, and sometimes he would help us."* – Kurt Blecher (Blecher, 1995)

Additionally, survivors were able to help provide for others, usually their family members, who did not have receive or have access to more food:

"The whole purpose of my life was to be able to serve and help them [his family]. I was the only young guy. We were very close family." – Sasha Erlik (Erlik, 1995)

Stealing within the ghetto

"If somewhere, potatoes were delivered, you know potatoes for the rest of the camp, somebody would say 'oh they are at this and this cellar.' I used to have long rods from…wire, I had friends, boys, who worked with electricians who would get us some wire… We used to fish for the potatoes…Pull it up, hopefully not be caught, and get it." – Judith Nachum (Nachum, 1995)

Stealing from gentiles during the early years

During the early years of the ghetto, the town still had gentiles living in it. This provided inmates the opportunity to acquire additional resources that they could consume or choose to exchange:

"There as an enormous amount of trafficking with food because the Gentiles were in the

city still. If you managed to steal something, some sort of diamond, in the hems of your skirt, you could exchange it for food. Or cigarette. It was a forgoing process, the effort to get a hold of some food. As long as the Gentiles were in the city, it was easier." – Vera Schiff (Schiff, 1981)

Acquiring extra food during distribution

Food distribution time served as an opportunity to acquire more food than was allowed on one's ration card. However, this was only true for those who worked in or had connections to workers in the kitchen:

"I knew the head chef as well, he always gave me a few extra portions, so that someone we know…could give a little extra. When my parents came to my [ration distribution] window, instead of giving them their own portion… she had my ration card. So, when she came, I not only gave her a little more on her ration card, but on my ration card I gave a little more. On my father's ration card, I gave him a little more. When my brother came, I gave him more to eat. So, all of the sudden I was able to help out on extra food." – Kurt Ladner (Ladner, 1996)

Outside of having kitchen connections, the time in which you received the distributed food also impacted if you got extra dinner or not. One survivor explained how he benefited from being one of the last inmates to receive ration for the day:

"We were the last ones to get, which was pretty good because we didn't get just our portion, but we got whatever was leftover. So sometimes we got there and filled up, went again in line, and got another portion." – Hermann Hirschfeld (Hirschfeld, 1993)

Resource Exchanging

With additional foods acquired, many survivors talked about bartering with other inmates to acquire their desired food item:

> *"What I did was exchange it in bakery with baker because the baker had bread and I had a cucumber. But I didn't eat the bread. I gave it part to my father and part exchange it for something else. For example, they had something else and we exchange it for something else. I know some people got parcels from Switzerland… Red Cross…because I remember once exchanging sardines for a cucumber."* – Edith Wolf (Wolf, 1997)

Not only did survivors exchange food for food, but they also began to exchange personal belongings for additional food in the black market. The price of bread was quite high during exchanges:

> *"You could buy a loaf of bread for your wedding ring… You had to find someone who was able to sell it to you, you had to know him. I remember buying a loaf of bread once with my wedding ring. It was rather expensive, wasn't it?"* – Rose Svehla (Svehla, 1997)

One survivor also discussed how he used his personal trade skills to take part in the black market. He was able to produce desired goods and exchange them for additional food:

> *"One day, he [Danish entertainer] asked me if I could make him a ring. I had taken, since I was a mechanical and had little files and saws, I had taken to making rings and little emblems with letters for people out of silver spoons given to me. So, this fellow one day asked me to make a ring… He says I want my name on it. One hell of a big ring… and I said I would be glad to do that. He says if you'll do that for me, I'll give you so much bread. I made him ring and a lot more after that… took forever to make, but that's how I stayed alive."* – Werner Loeb (Loeb, 1998)

Making it Work

Throughout each oral testimony, survivors referenced multiple ways in which they displayed resilience to survive. Such resilience required adaptations, varying from emotional, physical, and mental shifts.

Stretching out the ration

Much of the strategies discussed to make the circumstances work surrounded stretching out the given ration. Individuals frequently discussed how they had to go against their natural instinct of eating their three-day ration in one day:

> *"Half a bread and by the time we got it, I was so hungry that I could have eaten the whole thing, but I knew that it had to last half a week."* – Hanna Lederer (Lederer, 1996)

Shifting mindset

In addition to strategies surrounding food acquisition and stretching, there was also an emotional shift required to survivors according to many interviewees. This shift enabled inmates to have the needed strength to withhold from eating their three-day ration in one day:

> *"I think that you eventually have to make up your mind. It's like smoking… the only way you can give it up is stop once and for all. Same in this case. You make the decision that I'll eat so much now and so much later."* – Werner Loeb (Loeb, 1998)

Thinking about the future

Other mindsets yearned for the future and frequently talked with fellow inmates about what they would do once they were out of Theresienstadt. Doing so allowed them to stay positive and survive:

> *"[The barley was] bad, especially the way they cooked it. We always dreamed, whenever*

after the war, we will do that barley thing and we will set the table and put it in on the table and look at it and say, 'let's go out to eat' that was our dream." – Hermann Hirschfeld (Hirschfeld, 1993)

Emotional Response to Perceived Hunger Levels

Survivors during oral testimonies talked in-depth about the different emotions tied to food acquisition and hunger levels. They talked about their perceptions of their own levels of hunger, as well as how they perceived others, specifically older individuals, suffered from small food rations and starvation.

Hunger Levels of Self

Several interviewees described extreme feelings of hunger during their time in Theresienstadt. Such feelings took a toll on them and created a negative surrounding environment:

"Together, with the hunger and the starvation, that made it dark and clouded." – Hermann Hirschfeld (Hirschfeld, 1993)

Not all survivors discussed feelings of extreme hunger. The type of labor that they participated generally impacted their feelings of hunger:

"And so [because we worked in the kitchen], we ate well. I'm sure it helped me to survive later because I was never undernourished at that time." – Sasha Erlik (Erlik, 1995)

Hunger Levels of Others

It was frequently stated that the majority of inmates who did not survive were older adults, since they received the lowest ration of food and not being able to work:

> *"Now older people died a lot in Theresienstadt, mainly from starvation and hunger. Particularly if they didn't have any children to look after them."* – Kurt Blecher (Blecher, 1995)

Many described how their parents struggled much more than them. In some cases, survivors even discussed how older people perceived their hunger levels:

> *"Mother said to make sure we fast for Yom Kippur. My father said, 'We've been fasting for two years.'"* – Kurt Ladner (Ladner, 1996)

Through labor, younger individuals were able to provide for their family, who they perceived to need the additional food more than themselves:

> *"Because this was considered a hard-working job, so I was receiving one and a half portion of bread against the others that received only one portion of bread. So, I already had more bread, so that I could give to my parents."* – Frederick Braun (Braun, 1995)

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 was created to depict how major themes identified interact to describe the survivor's experience surrounding food acquisition in the ghetto. The top portion of the framework shows the three major food procurement routes used by survivors to contribute to their overall food availability. The three main routes include ration, extra ration from labor, and an individual's social network. The size of the arrow indicates the estimated amount of food obtained from each source, according to survivor's testimonies. The varying amount of food obtained from receiving extra ration is indicated by the dashed line, as well as represented alongside the arrow pointing to extra ration to the food availability box. While each person's specific social network varied, it often consisted of family, friends, and living companions. The

bidirectional arrow represents the mutual relationship of food resource sharing between inmates of Theresienstadt's social networks.

The bottom portion of the framework outlines the factors that depleted (bottom left) and enhanced (bottom right) food resources. Depleting factors have an arrow pulling away from the central food availability box, indicating decreased food availability. Enhancing factors have an arrow pointing to the central food availability box, indicating increased food availability. The areas on both sides of the food availability box highlight the outcomes associated with having more or less food availability.

Discussion

The Nazi regime left millions food insecure, yet survivors noted highlighted additional food procurement routes used to survive. Additional sources of food, including stealing within/outside of the ghetto, bartering with fellow inmates, and receiving additional ration as a result of intense labor, helped inmates and their older family members improve their chances of survival. The majority of survivors noted that the older population of the ghetto faced worse cases of starvation, in comparison to themselves and other young inmates. The reasoning, according to survivors, was two-fold: 1) older adults received the smallest food ration and 2) older adults were not able to acquire additional food as well as the younger population was able to. The identification of these food acquisition behaviors, in addition to knowledge surrounding survivor's perceptions of hunger during their time in the ghetto, helps us understand how humanitarian aid can best serve the needs of vulnerable populations. Given that previous research has not yet focused specifically on food acquisition behaviors within the Theresienstadt ghetto, this study provides novel information about how people behave and work to survive during times of food insecurity.

Several limitations were identified throughout the research process. The main limitation identified is that the interviews were designed to collect the survivor's testimony and were not centered specifically around food acquisition behaviors and strategies. While many questions were asked surrounding the research theme, specific questions, including follow-up questions, were not accessible to the researcher. Additionally, only English interviews were used during this study, and interviews in different languages potentially include other themes. There are also limitations surrounding the time of the interview, as interviews took place approximately 40-50 years after the events described occurred. Experiences described by interviews could be distorted or confused by survivors. However, overall themes were still able to be identified since a relatively large sample size was used. Additionally, only those who survived the experiences were able to be interviewed and represented in the study. While survivors were able to describe their perceptions of those who did not survive, the interviews and research cannot attest directly to how other populations lived within the ghetto. Finally, the researcher likely had an influence on the results. While steps to limit researcher influence were taken, as with any qualitative research study, it is still imperative to recognize the potential impact of researcher bias. Future studies should include multiple researchers to limit biases.

Conclusions

This research improves our understanding of food acquisition behaviors and perception of Theresienstadt ghetto survivors from 1942 to the ghetto's liberation on May 10, 1945. Labor was the key determinant of which inmates of Theresienstadt were able to acquire additional foods outside of their set ration, as it not only made survivors eligible for additional ration, but it also provided the environment to steal additional foods. Stealing was identified as an important source of additional food that when used strategically, enabled many inmates to survive the

ghetto's harsh circumstances. Foods stolen were both consumed by the stealer and exchanged with other inmates of the ghetto acquire preferred foods. An additional source of additional food was identified as receiving foods from one's network of family and friends. The small quantity of food given and the low frequency of distribution throughout the ghetto was identified as the main concern within the ghetto. While survivors stated feelings of hunger during their time in the ghetto, the majority of survivors noted that the older population of the ghetto faced far worse cases of starvation.

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Appendix A

Interview Analysis Guide used by the researcher to collect information during all 14 oral testimony analyses.

Biographical information	
Name	
USC Shoah Identification number	
Date of birth	
Place of birth	
Place before the war	
Occupation before the war	
Occupation during the war	
Ghetto(s)	
Date of deportation to the ghetto (and/or stated age at the time of deportation to the ghetto)	
Date of deportation out of the ghetto or liberation date (and/or stated age at the time of deportation out of the ghetto or at time of liberation.)	

Background Questions	No	Yes (explain and give segment number)	unknown
Did the person attend private school or have a nanny or governess?			
Did the person attest to their socio-economic status directly?			

Did the person or their family have servants?			
Did the person or a relative attend or plan to attend Gymnasium (high school) and/or college)?			
Did the person apprentice in a job or trade? If so, give the job or trade.			
Was the person married? Or was there a divorce in the family?			
Did the person mention owning property or their family owning property? Do they mention renting their home? Did the person mention a pre-war street name or pre-war address?			
Did the person mention leisure activities or family vacations?			
What were the parents' occupations?			

How did the person describe their home?	
What language(s) did the person speak?	
What religion did the person practice? Explain any religious practices mentioned.	
Is the person involved with any political organization or youth group? What about the parents?	

Theresienstadt Questions	Explain and give segment number
What were the housing conditions of this person during the ghetto period? Was it an apartment or a dorm? How many rooms did it consist of? Was there running water? What was their access to a toilet like? Access to cooking appliances?	
What type of labor/work was this person engaged in during the ghetto period? If involved in labor/work, did person have access to additional food?	
Does person report sickness while in	

ghetto? If so, did they get additional food and/or time off from working to help them in recovery?	
Does person mention any friends or family who were able to assist them in any way?	
Does person report on ration given and/or how food was distributed?	
Does person report on sanitary conditions surrounding food?	
Does person discuss any other strategies utilized to acquire additional food?	
Does person directly state level of hunger felt while in ghetto?	
Does person mention others experiencing hunger differently than him/her?	
Additional, relevant information.	

Appendix B

Table describing intent of each question listed within the Interview Analysis Guide used by the researcher.

Section	Question Asked	Intent
Biographical Information (BI)	Name	To collect identifying information through USC Shoah Foundation.
BI	USC Shoah Identification number	To collect identifying information through USC Shoah Foundation.
BI	Date of birth	To calculate age of time of deportation to ghetto if not explicitly stated in interview.
BI	Place of birth	To gain understanding of person's cultural background that contributed to person's experience in Theresienstadt.
BI	Place before the war	To gain understanding of person's cultural background that contributed to person's experience in Theresienstadt.
BI	Occupation before the war	To gain understanding of person's skills and work background that contributed to person's experience in Theresienstadt.
BI	Occupation during the war	To understand labor participated in and identify the ways in which labor

		impacted hunger levels and food acquisition.
BI	Ghetto(s)	To understand if person is comparing experience in Theresienstadt to other ghettos lived in.
BI	Date of deportation to the ghetto (and/or stated age at the time of deportation to the ghetto)	To know the time period person was in Theresienstadt.
BI	Date of deportation out of the ghetto or liberation date (and/or stated age at the time of deportation out of the ghetto or at time of liberation.)	To know the time period person was in Theresienstadt and to understand if person is comparing experience in Theresienstadt to other ghettos/camps lived in.
Background Questions (BQ)	Did the person attend private school or have a nanny or governess?	To gain information that contributes to a greater understanding of person's socioeconomic status.
BQ	Did the person attest to their socio-economic status directly?	To explore how person perceived family's socioeconomic status.
BQ	Did the person or their family have servants?	To gain information that contributes to a greater of person's socioeconomic status.
BQ	Did the person or a relative attend or plan to attend Gymnasium (high school) and/or college)?	To gain information that contributes to a greater of person's socioeconomic status.

BQ	Did the person apprentice in a job or trade? If so, give the job or trade.	To understand person's socioeconomic status and gather information on skills
BQ	Did the person mention owning property or their family owning property? Do they mention renting their home? Did the person mention a pre-war street name or pre-war address?	To gain information that contributes to a greater understanding of person's socioeconomic status.
BQ	Did the person mention leisure activities or family vacations?	To gain information that contributes to a greater understanding of person's family background and socioeconomic status.
BQ	What were the parents' occupations?	To gain information that contributes to a greater understanding of person's family background and socioeconomic status.
BQ	How did the person describe their home?	To gain information that contributes to a greater understanding of person's family background and socioeconomic status.
BQ	What language(s) did the person speak?	To gain understanding of person's cultural background that contributed to person's experience in Theresienstadt.
BQ	What religion did the person practice? Explain any religious practices mentioned.	To gain understanding of person's religious background that contributed

		to person's experience in Theresienstadt.
BQ	Is the person involved with any political organization or youth group? What about the parents?	To gain understanding of person's religious and political background that contributed to person's experience in Theresienstadt.
Theresienstadt Questions (TQ)	What were the housing conditions of this person during the ghetto period? Was it an apartment or a dorm? How many rooms did it consist of? Was there running water? What was their access to a toilet like? Access to cooking appliances?	To gather information on treatment received within Theresienstadt (i.e. disabled war veterans' home, children's home, etc.)
TQ	What type of labor/work was this person engaged in during the ghetto period? If involved in labor/work, did person have access to additional food?	To draw association between type of labor assigned and amount of additional food acquired by person, both legally and illegally.
TQ	Did the person report sickness while in ghetto? If so, did they get additional food and/or time off from working to help them in recovery?	To better understand additional rations (if any) given to sick inmates of Theresienstadt to establish priorities of Theresienstadt food distributors.
TQ	Did the person mention any friends or family who were able to assist them in any way?	To gather the complete dietary intake of person, beyond the given ration.
TQ	Did the person report on ration given and/or how food was distributed?	To confirm known ration given to inmate groups in Theresienstadt. To see any

		differences in reports of ration given among survivors.
TQ	Did the person report on sanitary conditions surrounding food?	To gather information on food distribution practices that contributed to person's perception of food acquisition.
TQ	Did the person discuss any other strategies utilized to acquire additional food?	To understand how person collected additional food outside of ration given.
TQ	Did the person directly state level of hunger felt while in ghetto?	To understand person's perception of hunger while in ghetto.
TQ	Did the person mention others experiencing hunger differently than him/her?	To gain information on person's perception of others living in ghetto.
TQ	Additional, relevant information.	To collect any further information relevant to study that is not encompassed in analysis questions.

Appendix C

Table displaying the demographics and main findings of the population studied by the researcher.

Characteristic	Number	Percent
Age at Arrival to Ghetto		
<18	7	50.0
19-24	3	21.4
25-29	3	21.4
30+	1	07.1
Gender		
Female	7	50.0
Male	7	50.0
Origin Country		
Czechoslovakia	9	64.3
Germany	3	21.4
Austria	1	07.1
Hungary	1	07.1
Year Arrived in Ghetto		
1942	9	64.3
1943	3	21.4
1944	2	14.3
1945	0	00.0
Labor Status in Ghetto		
Participated in labor	14	100
Did not participate in labor	0	00.0
Type of Labor		
Agriculture	6	25.0
Kitchen	3	12.5
Street Construction	3	12.5
Cleaning	3	12.5

Sorter	2	08.3
Medical	2	08.3
Painter	1	04.2
Glimmer	1	04.2
Cattle	1	04.2
Bakery	1	04.2
Social Network Employment		
Network participated in labor	8	57.1
Network did not participate in labor	6	42.9
Self-Reported Hunger Status of Self		
Extreme hunger	10	71.4
Neutral	2	14.3
Did not state	2	14.3
Stated Hunger Status of Older Adults		
Extreme Hunger	9	64.3
Neutral	0	00.0
Did not state	5	35.7

Appendix D

Table describing the strategies identified by survivors that were used within the Theresienstadt ghetto to acquire additional foods.

Strategy Identified	**Count of Interviewees**
Labor stealing	13
Stealing within ghetto	5
Stealing within ghetto (from gentiles)	1
Social network stealing	5
Acquire extra ration during distribution	4
Exchanging/bartering	5
Extra ration from sickness	2
Received parcels	2
Search through garbage	1

Appendix E

Outline of the conceptual framework, created to describe the major themes found from survivor's testimonies.

