

The background of the cover is a black and white photograph of a desolate landscape. In the foreground, a chain-link fence runs diagonally across the frame. Beyond the fence, there is a field of tall, dry grass or weeds. In the distance, a tall, thin, triangular structure, possibly a tower or antenna, stands against a pale sky. The overall mood is somber and evocative.

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

THE HOLOCAUST
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

A SEVEN-NATION
COMPARATIVE STUDY

Tom W. Smith

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Dr. Tom W. Smith is director of the General Social Survey at the National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago.

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CONTENTS

Foreword	v
The Holocaust and its Implications: A Seven-Nation Comparative Survey	1
Notes	24
Tables	25
References	41

Memory of the Holocaust Study

The study was conducted in Austria, France, Germany, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States under the overall direction of TNS Sofres in France (TNS Sofres, 2005). Computer-assisted telephone interviewing was used in each country. In the United States (U.S.) sampling used random-digit dialing with stratification by region. In the six European samples quotas were used stratified by region and community type. The field dates in Poland were April 12-17, 2005. In the other six countries the field dates were March 22 to April 6, 2005. The total sample size was 6,998 with 1,000 cases in Austria, 1,002 in France, 939 in Germany, 1,001 in Poland, 1,073 in Sweden, 978 in the United Kingdom (U.K.), and 1,005 in the U.S. All analysis employed weights supplied by the data-collection firms to better represent population demographics.

Knowledge about the Holocaust

Knowledge of the Holocaust is limited and uneven across nations. As Table 1 shows, identifying Auschwitz, Dachau, and Treblinka as concentration camps or some related facility (e.g., death camps, extermination camps, camps) ranged from 91 percent in Sweden to just 44 percent in the U.S. “Don’t know” levels ran from 46 percent in the U.S. to 5 percent in Sweden. Correctly indicating that about six million Jews were killed by the Nazis during World War II ran from 55 percent in Sweden to 33 percent in the U.S.¹

Two knowledge scales were made from these knowledge items. The first counted the number of “don’t know” responses (Table 2A). Lack of knowledge was greatest in the U.S. with 15 percent not knowing either fact, 39 percent giving only one answer, and 47 percent answering both items. Knowledge was greatest in Austria, France, and Sweden with 83-85 percent giving answers to both questions. The second scale combined “don’t know” responses with incorrect responses to the items on the number of Jews killed (Table 2B).²

Giving a “don’t know” or incorrect response for both items ranged from a low of 3 percent in Sweden to 38 percent in the U.S. Getting both factual questions right—i.e., no “don’t know” or incorrect responses to either—went from 54 percent in Sweden to 25 percent in the U.S.³

One might expect that knowledge would be greater in countries most directly involved in the Holocaust, since people tend to learn more about their own history than others do. On this basis one would expect knowledge to be highest in Germany as the perpetrator of the Holocaust; followed by Austria as part of the German Reich during World War II; then Poland as an occupied nation, homeland of many victims, and site of major concentration camps; France as another occupied nation and harvesting ground for victims; next perhaps Sweden as a neutral close to Germany and its occupied territories and a refuge for Jews and others fleeing the Nazis; then the U.K. as a European Allied power; and finally the U.S. as a non-European Allied power. But, in fact, knowledge deviates notably from this model. Knowledge is greatest in Sweden, followed by France, Germany, Austria, the U.K., Poland, and the U.S. Thus, knowledge in Sweden is greater than expected, while the Germans and especially the Polish are less well informed than their historical proximity would predict.

Knowing and Teaching about the Holocaust

Strong support exists across countries for preserving knowledge of and teaching students about the Holocaust. Having people know about and understand the Holocaust is seen as essential or very important by a strong majority of people in all countries, ranging from 74 percent in the U.K. to 89 percent in Austria (Table 3A). Likewise, support for the idea that one should “keep the remembrance of the Nazi extermination of the Jews strong” runs from 73 percent in Germany to 92 percent in Sweden (Table 3B). Similarly,

backing for requiring teaching about the Holocaust in schools goes from 69 percent in Poland to 92 percent in Austria (Table 3C).

All countries have high average scores, from Sweden leading with 89.7 percent to France (84.7 percent), Austria (83.7 percent), the U.S. (79.3 percent), the U.K. (77 percent), Germany (76 percent), and Poland (74.7 percent).

Likelihood of Another Holocaust

In most countries relatively few people believe that Jews are facing serious problems or that another Holocaust is likely. Another Holocaust is seen as very likely to happen somewhere in the world by a low of 3 percent in France to a high of just 13 percent in the U.S. (Table 4A). In all countries except Austria a majority think that another Holocaust is not very likely. There appears to be more concern about anti-Semitism in one's own country, with from 8 percent in Austria to 32 percent in Germany considering it a very serious problem (Table 4B). Only from 10-11 percent in France and Germany to 32-33 percent in the U.K. and Austria judge anti-Semitism not to be a problem at all. Combining these two measures, the highest level of problems is seen in Germany (19.5 percent) followed by France (14.5 percent), Poland (13 percent), the U.S. (12 percent), Sweden (11.5 percent), and Austria and Poland (both 9 percent).

Sympathy toward Jews and Israel

Unsympathetic feelings toward Jews are rare (never exceeding 6 percent) and are always substantially outnumbered by sympathetic feelings (Table 5A). In most countries a majority of respondents are neutral toward Jews, but in the U.K. and the U.S. a majority of 55 percent are sympathetic. Views of Israel are less positive in all countries with unsympathetic feelings at or above 20 percent, in Austria (20 percent), Germany (21 percent), and Sweden (25 percent) (Table 5B). On the two measures the greatest sympathy is found in the U.S. (52.5 percent), then in the U.K. (46.5 percent), France (38 percent),

Sweden (30.5 percent), Poland (30 percent), Germany (22 percent), and Austria (15.5 percent).

Two scales show the contrast between feelings toward Jews and Israel. The first scale subtracts the expressions of sympathy towards Israel from positive expressions toward Jews, and since sympathetic feelings have lower scores, a positive score means that people are more positive toward Jews than toward Israel while a negative score indicates that people have greater sympathy for Israel than for Jews. While a majority of people rate Jews and Israel the same, on average sympathy is greater toward Jews than toward Israel in all countries (Table 6A). The edge is smallest in Poland (-16.3 points vs. + 10.9 or a net of -5.2 points) and the U.S. (-25.0 vs. 12.8 = -12.2 points) and greatest in Sweden (-41.0 points). Comparing these two measures in a different way also shows that the feelings are usually similar, but that ratings of Jews as positive and Israel as neutral or negative exceed ratings of Israel as positive and Jews as neutral or negative in all countries. The margin is large in all countries except Poland and the U.S. (Table 6B).

Negative Views toward Jews

A substantial number of people in all countries endorse negative statements about Jews: that they are “exploiting the memory of the Nazi extermination of Jews for their own purposes” and that “Jews exert too much influence on world events” (Table 7). The view of Jews as exploiters of the Holocaust is accepted by a low of 23-24 percent in the U.S. and the U.K. and a high of 47 percent in Poland. The assertion that Jews have too much influence is agreed to by 27-29 percent in Sweden, the U.K., and the U.S. and by 56 percent in Poland. On both measures, agreement with the negative statements ranged from 51.5 percent in Poland to 43.5 percent in Austria, 39 percent in Germany, 31.5 percent in France, 30.5 percent in Sweden, and 26 percent in both the U.K. and the U.S.

Israel as a Jewish Refuge in Times of Persecution

A majority of people in all countries believe that the Holocaust “makes clear the need for the State of Israel as a place of refuge for Jews in times of persecutions” (Table 8). This idea is accepted by from 53 percent in France and the U.K. to 58 percent in the U.S., 64 percent in both Austria and Germany, 66 percent in Sweden, and 70 percent in Poland.

“Don’t Knows” on Attitude Questions

The publics across the seven countries generally were able to express definite attitudes on these issues. From 69 percent in Germany to 87.5 percent in France took a position on all ten issues (Table 9). Those having no opinion on half or more of the questions ranged from 0.3 percent in France to 7.4 percent in the U.S. In general, countries with low knowledge scores (Tables 2 and 3) are those with high no-opinion levels. The relationship between knowledge and holding opinions is even more pronounced at the individual level within countries. The two knowledge scales, but especially the knowledge/don’t know scale, are strongly related to the no-opinion scale, with people much more likely to hold attitudes when they are more knowledgeable.

Overall Position on Contemporary Attitude Questions

Looking at the ranking of countries on the seven items about attitudes toward Jews and Israel and the contemporary role of the Holocaust shows a great diversity of responses. No country is consistently high or low on all measures. The U.S. has the most positive overall rankings, being first on sympathy, tied for first with the U.K. as having the least negative views, in the middle on the seriousness of problems, and in fifth place in accepting Israel as a Jewish refuge (being relatively low in large part due to a high level of “don’t knows”). Next, in close proximity to one another, come Sweden, France, and

Germany (tied), Poland, and the U.K. Sweden is second on accepting Israel as a Jewish refuge, third lowest in rejecting negative images, fourth in sympathy, and fifth in considering problems as serious. French positions also show considerable variation from being second on seeing problems as serious to third on sympathy, fourth on rejecting negative images, and tied for last in accepting Israel as a Jewish refuge. German attitudes also range widely from being most likely to see problems, tied for third in accepting Israel as a Jewish refuge, fifth in rejecting negative images, and sixth in sympathy. Similarly, Polish positions go from first in accepting Israel as a refuge, third in seeing serious problems, fifth in sympathy, and last in rejecting negative images. Likewise, in the U.K. rankings range from tied for first on having the least negative images to second on sympathy to tied for last in seeing problems and accepting Israel as a Jewish refuge. Then with the least positive attitudes comes Austria, tied for third on Israel as a Jewish refuge, sixth on rejecting negative images, tied for last on seeing problems, and lowest on sympathy.

Attitude Scales

The preceding discussion of the ten attitude items was organized by how these various items relate to one another. A factor analysis of how items cluster together showed that in six of the seven countries the attitude items form four similar scales (Table 10). In the U.S. only three factors appeared. First, the three items on the importance of knowing about and understanding the Holocaust, Holocaust remembrance, and teaching about the Holocaust form a factor in all countries (Tables 3 and 10A). Second, the two items on the possibility of another Holocaust and the seriousness of anti-Semitism form a distinct factor in all countries except the U.S. (Tables 4 and 10B). Third, the sympathy questions toward Jews and Israel form a factor in two countries, and in another three countries these items are joined by the question on Israel as a Jewish refuge. Fourth, the two items on Jews exploiting the Holocaust and Jews having too

much influence in the world form a factor in five countries and in two countries these items are joined by the Jewish refuge item. The Jewish refuge item both tends to have the weakest loadings on whatever factor it relates to and to have strong secondary loadings on other factors. That means that it has a somewhat different meaning to different people and a variable association to the other items both within and across countries.

Based on this factor analysis, five scales were created. The first, the know/teach scale, is based on three items and ranges from a 3 for someone saying that understanding the Holocaust is essential or very important, remembrance should be kept strong, and the Holocaust should be taught about in schools to a 6 for someone who opposes each of these positions (Table 11A). The second, the problem/again scale, consists of two items and runs from a 2 for someone who said another Holocaust was very likely and that anti-Semitism was a very serious problem to a 6 for someone who said that another Holocaust was not very likely and anti-Semitism was not a problem at all (Table 11B). The third, the sympathy scale, is a two-item scale going from 2 for someone who was very sympathetic toward both Jews and Israel to 10 for someone who was very unsympathetic toward both (Table 11C). The fourth, the sympathy plus refuge scale, adds the Israel as a Jewish refuge item to the two sympathy questions and runs from a 3 for someone very sympathetic toward both Jews and Israel and who strongly agrees that the Holocaust makes clear the need for Israel being a Jewish refuge to a 15 for someone very unsympathetic toward Jews and Israel and who strongly disagrees about Israel being a Jewish refuge (Table 11D). It is used along with the sympathy scale because the refuge item joins with these two in several countries. The last scale consists of the two items with negative statements about Jews (that they exploit the Holocaust and have too much influence) and goes from 2 for someone who strongly agrees that Jews are exploiting the Holocaust and that Jews have too much influence on world events to 8 for someone who strongly dis-

agrees with both (Table 11E). The mean values for these scales are given in Table 11.

Demographic Correlates of Knowledge Items

In virtually all countries men are more knowledgeable about the Holocaust than women are. Men give fewer “don’t know” responses to identifying the named concentration camps and are more likely to indicate correctly that about six million Jews were exterminated by the Nazis during World War II. The gender differences are especially large in the U.S., with 39 percent of men and 52 percent of women being unable to identify the named concentration camps and with 44 percent of men and just 24 percent of women knowing that about six million Jews were exterminated. (For exact country-by-country figures, see the tables in TNS Sofres, 2005.)

More education is also consistently related to greater knowledge in all countries. For example, in Germany only 2 percent of the college educated did not know what the named concentration camps were as compared to 29 percent with an incomplete elementary education. Similarly, in France knowing the correct number of Jews exterminated rose from 24 percent for those without a degree to 61 percent for those with top university degrees.

Knowledge about the Holocaust also increases with income across most countries. The income relationship is generally smaller than the education effect and partly just a reflection of the higher earnings that tend to go with more education. For example, not knowing the concentration camps ran from 31 percent for the lowest income group in the U.S. to 9-10 percent in the two highest income categories. Likewise, in Sweden the correct number of exterminations was known by 54 percent of low and middle income earners and 61 percent of high earners.

Age has no consistent relationship to knowledge across countries. Counter to a pattern often observed, knowledge is not greater among the oldest cohorts who lived during the events in question. In

part, this is because even young adults at the end of World War II would be 78+ at the time of the survey, and as such are both a minority of the 65+ age group analyzed here and at an age when recall, on average, begins to diminish. Moreover, those differences that do emerge are often not consistent for both knowledge items. The most consistent pattern is for knowledge of the number of Jewish exterminations to be highest among those 50-64 in five countries (except for Germany and Sweden).

Region of residence is not related to knowledge in most countries. In Austria and Poland not knowing what the named concentration camps were is greater outside the capital regions. On number of exterminations there was some regional variation in Austria, France, and Poland, but no consistent pattern across these nations.

Differences by size of place and community type were also irregular across countries. Recognition of the named concentration camps was lower in rural areas in Austria, Poland, and the U.S., lower in urban areas in the U.K.; unrelated in France and Sweden, and with an irregular association in Germany. Knowledge of the number of Jews exterminated was greater outside rural areas in France, Germany, and Poland, but unrelated in Austria, Sweden, the U.K., and the U.S.

Finally, when knowledge differs across political parties, it tends to be higher among center/right followers rather than among left or socialist adherents, and higher among those with some political identity rather than among those with no political leaning. This is true about the concentration camps in France, Germany, Poland, the U.K., and the U.S., but no difference appears in Austria or Sweden. On the number of Jewish exterminations, correct responses are higher among Republicans in the U.S., the Free Democrats and Greens in Germany, those other than the far-right Freedom Party in Austria, and those with some political identity in Poland. No differences occur in France, Sweden, or the U.K.

Demographic Correlates of Attitude Items Knowledge/Teaching

Attitudes toward remembering the Holocaust and teaching about it have no relation to gender in most countries.

In most countries remembrance and teaching about the Holocaust are more favored by the better educated, except for Sweden, where there is no difference by level of education. For example, in the U.S. 67 percent of those without a high school degree favor remembrance of the Holocaust as compared with 86 percent of those with a college degree. Teaching about the Holocaust is also endorsed by 67 percent of those without any degree, but by over 90 percent of the college grads.

More income is also related to greater support for remembering and teaching in about half the countries. The pattern is less regular both across the three measures and across countries, but only in Poland is there no association between higher income and greater support for knowledge and teaching.

Age has no consistent relationship across measures and countries. Considering knowledge of the Holocaust to be important is greater among the young in France, Germany, and the U.S., but among the old in the U.K. and unrelated in Austria, Poland, or Sweden. Remembrance is weakly related to being old in the U.K. and unrelated elsewhere. Teaching is most supported by those 40-49 in Germany and Sweden, those 30-39 in Poland, those under 30 in Austria, those younger than 65 in the U.S., and unrelated to age in France and the U.K.

Region is not related to attitudes concerning knowledge and teaching in most countries. When a relationship exists, it shows more people believing that Holocaust remembrance is important and should be continued in the former East Germany than in West Germany, in the capital region of Austria, and outside of the London region.

Size of place also is usually not related to attitudes toward knowledge and teaching. When differences occur, greater support appears in large urban areas than in smaller areas.

Political party affiliation often matters, but the pattern varies across countries. More support for knowledge and teaching tends to appear among the Greens and Socialists in Austria, Germany, and, for remembrance only, in France. But support is greater among the Republicans in the U.S., among the center/right in Poland and Sweden, and among parties other than Labour in the U.K.

Problems Facing Jews/Likelihood of Another Holocaust

Gender is not consistently related to seeing greater problems for Jews in terms of either the occurrence of a second Holocaust or of anti-Semitism. Women in Austria, France, Germany, the U.K., and U.S. see anti-Semitism as a greater problem than men see it, but women are more likely to be unsure of how serious it is in Sweden and the U.K., and in Poland there are no gender differences. On another Holocaust happening, the patterns are very scattered. Men express greater concern in the U.K. and women more in Austria and Sweden. In Germany and Poland men are more likely to see it as both very likely and not very likely, with women giving middle and "don't know" responses. There is no relationship in France and the U.S.

Education has little association with thinking about whether another Holocaust will happen. The better educated are more prone to see anti-Semitism as a serious problem in Austria, Poland, the U.K., and the U.S., but in Germany the less educated are most likely to see it as serious. Education is unrelated to evaluations of anti-Semitism in France and Sweden.

Income has scattered and variable associations about the problems facing Jews across measures and countries.

Region makes no difference in most countries, and those differences that appear do not form a consistent pattern across countries or measures.

Size of place also is not related to assessments of problems in most countries. The few notable associations in Germany and, to a lesser extent, France point to people in rural areas seeing greater problems.

Anti-Semitism is generally seen as a greater problem by the left and Greens in almost all countries except Sweden. Extreme rightist party supporters, such as the backers of Jean-Marie Le Pen in France and the far-right Freedom Party in Austria, are least likely to see it as a problem. Beliefs about another Holocaust have no regular pattern with party affiliation. It is seen as more likely by the left in Germany and France, but by Republicans in the U.S. There is no association in Austria or the U.K. and irregular patterns in Poland and Sweden.

Sympathy toward Jews and Israel

Sympathy toward Israel is greater among women in all countries except Austria and Germany, where there are no differences by gender. Women also have more sympathy toward Israel than men do in Germany, Sweden, the U.K., and the U.S., but there is no difference in France and Poland, and men show both more sympathy and less sympathy in Austria, with women tending to be neutral.

Education has different associations with sympathy by countries. Toward Jews there is more sympathy among the better educated in Austria and Sweden, more among the less educated in France, among the better and worse educated in Germany, and no association in Poland, the U.K., and U.S. Toward Israel there is more sympathy among the better educated in Austria, Poland, and the U.S., more among the less educated in France, more among the better and worse educated in Germany, more among the middle education levels in the U.K., and no association in Sweden.

Income also shows a highly mixed pattern of associations with sympathy. Toward Jews sympathy increases with income in Sweden and the U.K., decreases in Germany and Poland, has an irregular association in Austria, and is unrelated in France and the U.S.

Toward Israel sympathy is greater among the high income earners in Austria and the U.K., the low earners in Germany and Sweden, and not related to income in France, Poland, and the U.S.

Sympathy tends to be greater toward both Jews and Israel in most countries among older age groups, but the reverse occurs in Sweden for Jews. Also, the old in Austria and the U.S. give more "don't know" responses. Toward Israel there is no association with age in Sweden or the U.K.

Region has little association with sympathy, but it is greater in the Vienna region and some other places.

Size of place has little association with sympathy.

Sympathy has no consistent association with political parties across countries. In Austria the Socialists have greater sympathy and the far-right Freedom Party the least. In France the center-right tends to be more sympathetic toward both. In Germany toward Jews there is greater sympathy among the ex-Communists and Free Democrats, and towards Israel among the Socialists and Free Democrats. In Poland parties differentiate little. In Sweden the Center Party and Christian Democrats have the most sympathy and the Socialists the least. In the U.S. sympathy towards Jews differs little between Democrats and Republicans, but Republicans express more sympathy toward Israel than Democrats do. In the U.K. there is little political party variation toward Jews, but Conservatives and political others show more sympathy toward Israel.

Negative Views of Jews

There is some tendency for men to endorse negative statements more than women do. On exploiting the Holocaust, men agree with the statement more often than women do in Austria, France, Poland, the U.K., and the U.S. Women are more likely to say "don't know" in Germany, and there are no gender differences in Sweden. Having too much influence is more accepted by men in Germany, Poland, Sweden, and the U.K., and there are no differences in Austria,

France, and the U.S.

Education tends to reduce negative views. The charge of exploitation is more accepted by the less educated in France, Sweden, and the U.S. and by those with lower and middle educations in Austria. It is highest among those not reporting education in Poland and the U.K., and greater among the better educated in Germany. Having too much influence is more accepted by the less educated in France, Germany, Poland, Sweden, the U.K., and the U.S. and among those with middling educations in Austria (but least accepted among the college educated).

Income has variable and mostly irregular relations toward negative images, with no common patterns.

Age shows a varied association on exploiting the Holocaust, with this belief stronger among the old in France, Sweden, and the U.S. and among those 40-49 in Poland. In Germany the old are more likely to say they don't know. No differences appear in Austria or the U.K. On having too much influence, the young are least likely to accept this idea in all countries except the U.K., where there are no differences by age.

Region has no association toward exploiting the Holocaust. Some regional differences do appear on Jews having too much influence, but there is no consistent pattern across countries.

Size of place has little association with exploiting the Holocaust. Acceptance is greater in rural areas in Sweden, in larger areas in the U.K., with an irregular relationship in Germany, and with no association in Austria, France, Poland, and the U.S. The idea that Jews have too much influence is more prevalent in more rural areas in Sweden, the U.K., and the U.S., irregularly related in Germany, and unrelated in Austria, France, and Poland.

Political party affiliation relates in different ways across countries. In Austria and France right-leaning parties are more likely to agree with both, while the Labour Party in the U.K. and Democrats in the U.S. are more likely to agree with both. The other countries

do not show a clear and consistent pattern on both measures.

Israel as a Jewish Refuge

On the need for Israel as a Jewish refuge, gender has no consistent association. Acceptance is greater among women in Sweden, “don’t knows” are higher for women in the U.K. and the U.S., men are more accepting in Germany, and no differences show up in Austria, France, or Poland.

Acceptance is greater among the less educated in France, Sweden, and the U.K., “don’t knows” higher among the less educated in Germany, and there are no differences in Austria, Poland, or the U.S.

More income is related to greater acceptance in Germany and the U.S.; the opposite is true in Poland; there is an irregular association in Austria and the U.K.; those who refuse to report their income are more likely to say don’t know in Sweden; and there is no association in France.

Those over 65 are more accepting in all countries. In addition, in the U.S. “don’t knows” are highest among the oldest group.

Region is unrelated in France, Germany, Poland, and Sweden and shows no clear, consistent pattern in Austria, the U.K., or the U.S.

Acceptance is greater in larger areas in Austria, rural areas in the U.K., irregularly related in Germany and Poland, and unrelated in France, Sweden, and the U.S.

On political parties acceptance varies by country. It is higher among the center/right (but not the far right) in France, Sweden, and the U.S., among the left in Austria, and irregular in Germany, Poland, and the U.K.

The Relationship between Knowledge and Attitudes

As the first column in Table 12 shows, having less knowledge about the Holocaust leads to less support for remembrance of and teaching about it in all countries. In turn, support for knowing and teaching about the Holocaust relates to seeing problems as serious, having

sympathy toward Jews, having sympathy toward and accepting Israel as a Jewish refuge, and rejecting negative images (rejection being indicated by the negative signs). But except in the U.S., knowledge itself is only weakly and sporadically related to these attitudes. Of the forty associations in the six European countries, only fourteen statistically significant associations appear, and none are strong. The most common pattern, accounting for half of these statistically significant associations, is for lack of knowledge to be associated with the lower support on the sympathy+refuge scale. Poland has more and stronger associations than the other European countries (five of a possible eight), but one, the association with greater ignorance and less support for negative images, is in the wrong direction. In the U.S. all associations are statistically significant, but none are strong.

Table 13 explores these relationships further using multivariate regression analysis that simultaneously considers the impact on attitudes of age, education, knowledge, and support for knowing and teaching about the Holocaust. The first column shows how knowledge about the Holocaust, age, and education predict support for remembrance and teaching. In all countries, those with more knowledge are less supportive of forgetting and not teaching (hence the negative signs). Age is only related in the U.K., where older adults are more supportive of remembrance and teaching. Education, on the other hand, makes a difference in all countries, with the better educated opposing forgetting and not teaching. In sum, in all countries, more education and, independent of education, more knowledge about the Holocaust lead to support for being knowledgeable about the Holocaust, remembering it, and teaching about it.⁴

The following columns then shift the knowing/teaching scale to being a predictor or independent variable and seek to explain successively each of the attitude scales. In all there are twenty-eight associations (four scales by seven countries). Support for knowledge and teaching of the Holocaust is significantly associated in all countries with all scales (i.e., those favoring remembrance and teaching are

more likely to see serious problems, feel sympathy toward Jews, feel sympathy toward and consider Israel a Jewish refuge, and reject negative images of Jews). Age is significantly related in twenty instances. Being old is generally associated with greater sympathy and more sympathy+considering Israel a Jewish refuge, but also holding more negative images of Jews. The latter probably reflects the decline of negative stereotypes of Jews across time and cohorts (Smith, 1994; 2001; 2005). In the U.K. and the U.S. older adults see problems as more serious, but in France, Germany, and Poland younger adults tend to see problems as more serious. Neither knowledge nor education has a widespread, direct impact on attitudes, with respectively only five and six statistically significant associations. When more knowledge makes a difference, it generally leads to more sympathy and less negative images. When education makes a difference, it is associated with fewer negative images (in Austria, Sweden, and the U.K.), but seeing problems as less serious (in France and the U.K.).

The multivariate analysis indicates that knowledge about the Holocaust is important in promoting its remembrance and teaching. Maintaining knowledge, in turn, promotes more pro-Jewish/Israeli attitudes, but knowledge has little direct impact on these attitudes. Knowledge encourages remembrance and teaching, and that, in turn, undoubtedly increases and perpetuates knowledge. Thus, these mutually reinforce one another. But the impact of knowledge on attitudes is mostly indirect, operating through support of remembrance and knowledge, and not directly.

Patterns by Country

Looking at knowledge about the Holocaust, attitudes toward Holocaust remembrance and teaching, and attitudes toward Jews and Israel shows the following country-by-country patterns:

Austria: Austrians rank fourth in knowledge about the Holocaust and third in giving “don’t know” responses to the attitude questions. They are also toward the middle (third) in supporting

remembrance of and teaching about the Holocaust. Austrians generally have less positive views of Jews and Israel than those in other countries. They rank last on sympathy, next to last on seeing problems and rejecting negative images, and are tied for third in seeing Israel as a Jewish refuge.

As in most countries, Austrians who are more knowledgeable about the Holocaust are more for remembrance and teaching, those for more remembrance and teaching have more positive views about Jews and Israel, but knowledge does not directly affect attitudes toward Jews and Israel.

France: The French are relatively well-informed (second) and opinionated (fewest “don’t knows”). They also give fairly high support for remembrance and teaching (second). The French are quite variable in their attitudes toward Jews and Israel. They are second highest in seeing serious problems, third in sympathy toward Jews and Israel, fourth in rejecting negative images, and tied for last in seeing Israel as a Jewish refuge.

Like in most other countries, the French who are more knowledgeable about the Holocaust are more for remembrance and teaching; those for more remembrance and teaching have more positive views about Jews and Israel, but knowledge does not directly affect attitudes toward Jews and Israel.

Germany: Germans are in the middle in knowledge about the Holocaust (third) and holding opinions (fourth), but relatively low in supporting remembrance and teaching (sixth). German attitudes toward Jews and Israel run from being most likely to think that problems exist, to being tied for third in seeing Israel as a Jewish refuge, to fifth in rejecting negative images, to sixth in sympathy toward Jews and Israel.

As elsewhere, Germans knowledgeable about the Holocaust are more for remembrance and teaching; those for more remembrance and teaching have more positive views about Jews and Israel, but knowledge does not directly affect attitudes toward Jews and Israel.

Poland: The Poles are low on knowledge (sixth overall or at the bottom of the European countries), but relatively opinionated (second). They are least likely to favor remembrance of and teaching about the Holocaust. Polish attitudes span the gamut from being highest in seeing Israel as a Jewish refuge to third in considering problems as serious, to fifth in sympathy, and last in rejection of negative images of Jews.

As generally the case, Poles who are more knowledgeable about the Holocaust are more for remembrance and teaching; those for more remembrance and teaching have more positive views about Jews and Israel, but knowledge has a mixed direct impact on attitudes toward Jews and Israel.

Sweden: The Swedes are the most knowledgeable people, but are relatively less opinionated (fifth). They also are most supportive of remembrance and teaching. Swedes are second most likely to view Israel as a Jewish refuge, third in rejecting negative images, fourth in sympathy, and fifth in finding problems serious.

As in most countries, Swedes who are more knowledgeable about the Holocaust are more for remembrance and teaching; those for more remembrance and teaching have more positive views about Jews and Israel, but knowledge does not directly affect attitudes toward Jews and Israel.

United Kingdom: The British are relatively poorly informed about the Holocaust (fifth), less opinionated than most others (sixth), and relatively less supportive of remembrance and teaching (fifth). They are tied for first in rejecting negative statements about Jews and second in sympathy, but tied for last in seeing Israel as a Jewish refuge and last in believing problems are serious.

Like in most countries, the British who are more knowledgeable about the Holocaust are more for remembrance and teaching; those for more remembrance and teaching have more positive views about Jews and Israel, but knowledge does not directly affect attitudes toward Jews and Israel.

United States: Americans are the least knowledgeable and have the highest level of “don’t knows,” but are in the middle (fourth) on favoring Holocaust remembrance and teaching. Overall, Americans have the most positive views toward Jews and Israel, ranking first on sympathy, tied for first in rejection of negative images of Jews, fourth on seeing problems as serious, and fifth on seeing Israel as a Jewish refuge (low mainly due to a high number of “don’t knows”).

As in all countries, Americans who are more knowledgeable about the Holocaust are more for remembrance and teaching, and those for more remembrance and teaching have more positive views about Jews and Israel. But more so than in other countries, knowledge has some direct, positive impact on attitudes toward Jews and Israel.

Summary and Conclusions

Knowledge of basic facts about the Holocaust is limited and variable across countries. Only in Sweden did a majority of people correctly know both what the named concentration camps were and that about six million Jews were exterminated by the Nazis. The U.S. was the least knowledgeable country, with only 25 percent knowing both items. Despite the limited knowledge, support for knowing and teaching about the Holocaust was strong in all countries with an average of 75-90 percent saying knowing and understanding the Holocaust was essential or very important, that remembrance should be kept strong, and that schools should teach about the Holocaust.

Contemporary attitudes toward Jews and Israel show a mixture of positive and negative leanings. First, these matters are not generally seen as major pressing problems. Few people in any of the countries believe that another Holocaust is very likely, and only in Austria does a majority consider it even somewhat likely. Anti-Semitism is perceived to be a serious problem by only about 10 percent in Austria, the U.K., and the U.S., but by a quarter or more in France and Germany. Second, sympathetic views of Jews and Israel greatly out-

number unsympathetic attitudes in all countries. But except for the American views of Israel, neutral views surpass favorable attitudes toward Jews and Israel in all countries. Also, in all countries there is more sympathy for Jews than for Israel. Third, in all countries except Poland more people disagree with the negative images that Jews are exploiting the Holocaust and have too much influence in the world. But the negative beliefs are still quite common, averaging from a low of 26 percent in the U.K. and U.S. to 30-some percent in France, Germany, and Sweden, over 40 percent in Austria, and over 50 percent in Poland. Finally, a majority in all countries agree that the Holocaust "makes clear" the need for Israel as a Jewish refuge. Overall, attitudes are more positive than negative, but notable levels of anti-Jewish and/or anti-Israeli sentiments exist in all countries, and in some countries majorities share such sentiments.

On the seven attitudes toward Jews and Israel, the most positive overall views are held in the U.S., then followed closely together by Sweden, France, Germany, Poland, and the U.K., and finally Austria. However, rankings on the specific attitude domains of problems, sympathy, sympathy+refuge, and negative images usually vary quite a bit within countries.

Across countries, knowledge of the Holocaust is generally greater among men, the better educated, and those with higher incomes. Age and political party have different associations in different nations. Region and size of place make little difference in most cases.

Only a few demographic differences generally prevail across countries, and the same patterns often do not exist across measures. Women are usually more sympathetic than men are toward Jews and Israel, and, more weakly, more men than women tend to hold negative images of Jews. Education has the most consistent association, with the better educated tending to favor remembrance and teaching about the Holocaust, see problems as more serious, and reject negative images. High income is most consistently related to backing

knowing and teaching about the Holocaust. As to age, older adults are more likely to express sympathy and accept Israel as a Jewish refuge, but are more prone to hold negative images. Region and size of place show few notable differences. While some notable country-specific differences do appear, there are no general, consistent patterns across most countries. Political party usually makes a difference in attitudes, but most differences are country specific and even often in the opposite direction across countries. Sometimes adherents of leftist parties and sometimes those of rightist parties (but not far-right parties) take more favorable positions toward Jews and/or Israel.⁵

Knowledge about the Holocaust has two major impacts on contemporary attitudes toward Jews and Israel. First, more knowledge is related to more support for remembrance and teaching, and in turn those favoring fostering knowledge of the Holocaust have more positive views toward Jews and Israel. Knowledge, however, has little direct influence on these issues. Second, knowledge about the Holocaust leads to having opinions on the items about Jews and Israel rather than saying one doesn't know.

The Holocaust casts a long and dark shadow over recent history, and while the Nazi extermination of Jews and others during World War II is now part of history, it is also a part of both the present and the future. Knowledge about the Holocaust leads people to see it as important, as a horrendous lesson that should be remembered and understood by society, and taught to succeeding generations to help ensure that it will never again occur.

NOTES

1. The full wordings of these and other questions are presented in the tables.

2. Other responses to the concentration camps question, unfortunately, appear to combine both correct descriptions of the three camps along with errant responses, and therefore incorrect responses cannot be identified.

3. In the U.S. among thirty-four factual questions about World War II asked of the general public, ten items relating to the Holocaust ranged from first to last in correct answers and overall were about average. Of seventeen items asked of high school juniors, the one Holocaust item had the sixth highest score, 12-17 percentage points above average (Smith, 1995c).

4. These models use the don't know+incorrect knowledge scale. The models were run with the don't know scale with very similar results.

5. A more in-depth understanding of the special conditions that shape attitudes in particular countries could focus on the distinct factors that prevail in individual nations.

Tables

Table 1
Knowledge about the Holocaust

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
A. Auschwitz, Dachau, Treblinka were							
Concentration Camps	72%	61%	62%	45%	73%	45%	32%
Death Camps	1	5	1	6	2	2	8
Extermination Camps	13	9	11	16	9	2	2
Camps	2	3	3	12	7	4	2
Other	5	13	11	13	4	21	10
Don't Know	7	9	12	8	5	26	46
B. Number of Jews Killed							
25,000	1%	2%	2%	3%	0%	4%	4%
100,000	7	4	5	6	2	7	13
1 million	15	16	10	12	9	13	13
2 million	19	13	13	12	11	12	6
6 million	41	49	49	30	55	39	33
20 million	5	9	8	7	8	8	9
Don't know	12	7	13	30	15	17	22

Question Wordings:

A=From what you know or have heard, what were Auschwitz, Dachau, and Treblinka?

B=Approximately how many Jews in all of Europe were killed by the Nazis during the Second World War?

Table 2
Knowledge about the Holocaust

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
A. Don't Knows							
2 Don't Knows	2.9%	1.7%	3.0%	3.8%	1.7%	8.9%	14.7%
1 Don't Know	13.1	13.0	18.2	30.3	15.7	24.5	38.7
No Don't Knows	84.0	85.3	78.7	65.9	82.6	66.5	46.6
B. Don't Knows+Incorrect							
2 Don't Know or Wrong	6.2%	7.2%	9.2%	6.8%	3.4%	19.7%	37.5%
1 Don't Know or Wrong	53.1	45.2	44.4	64.4	42.5	46.2	37.7
No Don't Knows or Wrong	40.6	47.6	46.4	28.7	54.1	34.1	24.9

Note:

A=counts number of "Don't Know" responses to two knowledge items (see Table 1)

B=counts number of "Don't Know" responses to two knowledge items, plus wrong response (i.e., not 6 million) to item on number of Jews exterminated by the Nazis (see Table 1)

Table 3
Knowing and Teaching about the Holocaust

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
A. Importance of Knowing/ Understanding the Holocaust							
Essential	44%	53%	38%	22%	57%	34%	33%
Very Important	45	34	38	48	29	40	45
Only Somewhat Important	8	11	17	27	11	16	13
Not Important	2	1	5	2	2	8	4
Don't Know	1	1	2	1	1	2	5
B. Remembering the Holocaust							
Time to Put it Behind Us	27%	17%	23%	23%	6%	16%	14%
Keep Remembrance Strong	70	81	73	74	92	81	80
Don't Know	3	2	4	3	2	3	6
C. Require Teaching of Holocaust							
Yes	92%	86%	79%	69%	91%	76%	80%
No	7	13	20	26	7	22	15
Don't Know	1	1	1	5	2	2	5

Question Wordings:

A=In your view, how important is it for all COUNTRY'S people to know about and understand the Nazi extermination of the Jews during the Second World War? Is it essential, very important, only somewhat important, or not important?

B=Some people say that sixty years after the end of the Second World War, it is time to put the memory of the Nazi extermination of the Jews behind us. Others say that we should keep the remembrance of the Nazi extermination of the Jews strong even after the passage of time. Which opinion comes closer to your opinion?

C=Do you think that teaching about the Nazi extermination of the Jews during the Second World War should be required in COUNTRY'S schools?

Table 4
Problems Facing Jews

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
A. Another Holocaust							
Very Likely	10%	3%	7%	6%	8%	9%	13%
Somewhat Likely	44	16	25	34	32	27	28
Not Very Likely	40	79	63	51	56	60	53
Don't Know	6	2	5	9	4	4	6
B. Problem of Anti-Semitism							
Very Serious Problem	8%	26%	32%	20%	15%	9%	11%
Somewhat of a Problem	55	63	53	53	58	47	56
Not a Problem at All	33	10	11	20	18	32	23
Don't Know	4	1	4	7	9	12	10

Question Wordings:

A= In your view, how likely is it that the Jewish people could be subject to another extermination attempt somewhere in the world in the coming years? Very likely, somewhat likely, or not very likely?

B= Do you think that anti-Semitism in COUNTRY is a very serious problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem at all?

Table 5
Sympathy toward Jews and Israel

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
A. Sympathy toward Jews							
Very Sympathetic	6%	13%	9%	4%	21%	22%	30%
Somewhat Sympathetic	12	32	13	29	17	32	25
Neutral	75	53	69	59	55	37	34
Somewhat Unsympathetic	4	1	2	4	3	5	3
Very Unsympathetic	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Don't Know	2	1	6	3	3	3	7
B. Sympathy toward Israel							
Very Sympathetic	4%	7%	7%	3%	6%	11%	20%
Somewhat Sympathetic	9	24	15	24	17	28	30
Neutral	64	55	52	63	48	43	35
Somewhat Unsympathetic	17	10	15	6	22	8	5
Very Unsympathetic	3	2	6	1	3	5	2
Don't Know	3	2	5	3	4	5	8

Question Wordings:

A=Are your own feelings about Jews very sympathetic, somewhat sympathetic, somewhat unsympathetic, very unsympathetic, or neutral?

B=Are your own feelings about Israel very sympathetic, somewhat sympathetic, somewhat unsympathetic, very unsympathetic, or neutral?

Table 6
Sympathy toward Jews and Israel Compared

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
A. Jewish-Israeli Sympathy							
-4	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%
-3	0.8	0.9	1.2	0.2	3.5	2.5	1.0
-2	5.6	7.5	8.2	2.3	11.1	10.2	7.5
-1	19.2	22.7	20.8	13.8	26.3	17.9	16.2
0	69.3	61.9	56.1	72.8	53.2	61.0	62.3
+1	3.7	6.7	8.9	10.3	4.1	5.6	8.8
+2	1.3	0.3	4.2	0.6	0.9	2.1	3.6
+3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.4
+4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0
B. Jewish/Israeli Typology							
Both Positive	9.2%	25.4%	10.7%	21.1%	19.1%	33.6%	41.7%
Jews Positive;							
Israel Less	22.7	25.9	25.5	14.1	32.9	22.4	14.2
Both Neutral	56.9	39.3	41.8	49.1	36.1	29.6	24.7
Israel Positive;							
Jews Less	3.9	5.6	11.0	8.5	4.4	6.6	9.2
Both Negative	3.4	1.0	1.6	2.0	2.8	2.5	1.7
1 or 2 Don't Know	4.0	2.8	9.4	5.1	4.8	5.3	8.5

Question Wordings: See Table 5

Table 7
Negative Views toward Jews

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
A. Jews Exploiting Holocaust							
Strongly Agree	12%	10%	16%	14%	4%	8%	6%
Agree	30	22	26	33	30	16	17
Disagree	29	28	34	30	28	30	22
Strongly Disagree	22	37	15	13	30	35	41
Don't Know	7	3	9	10	8	11	14
B. Jews Have Too Much Influence On World Events							
Strongly Agree	15%	8%	12%	22%	3%	10%	8%
Agree	30	23	24	34	24	18	21
Disagree	31	32	39	31	30	36	30
Strongly Disagree	19	34	15	7	32	24	28
Don't Know	5	3	10	6	11	12	13

Question Wordings:

A=Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement:
Jews are exploiting the memory of the Nazi extermination of the Jews for their own purposes.

B=Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement:
Now, as in the past, Jews exert too much influence on world events.

Table 8
Israel as a Refuge for Jews in Times of Persecution

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
Strongly Agree	24%	19%	28%	23%	14%	21%	24%
Agree	40	34	36	47	52	32	34
Disagree	22	21	17	18	15	19	15
Strongly Disagree	8	21	8	5	8	15	9
Don't Know	6	5	11	7	11	13	18

Question Wording:

Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: The Nazi extermination of the Jews makes clear the need for the State of Israel as a place of refuge for Jews in times of persecution.

Table 9
Don't Knows to Ten Attitude Items

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
None	77.5%	87.5%	69.3%	70.0%	72.7%	71.4%	70.1%
1	14.4	8.2	18.9	18.3	13.1	13.8	13.9
2	5.0	2.5	5.2	5.0	8.1	7.2	4.0
3	1.8	1.3	3.0	3.6	2.7	2.2	3.6
4	0.5	0.2	1.5	0.8	0.9	1.6	0.9
5	0.5	0.1	1.1	0.5	0.4	0.9	1.8
6	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.3	1.0	1.2	1.7
7-10	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.9	1.7	3.9

Note: Count of number of "Don't Know" responses to all attitudes items about Holocaust, Israel, and Jews.

Table 10
Top Factor Loadings of Scales

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
A. Know/Teach							
Know/Understand Important	.716	.768	.813	.678	.696	.799	.636
Remembrance of Holocaust	-.644	-.670	-.750	-.707	-.778	-.786	-.692
Teach About Holocaust	.799	.782	.767	.765	.741	.682	.760
B. Problems/Again							
Another Holocaust	.797	.775	.844	.669	.736	.733	.615
Anti-Semitism a Problem	.709	.723	.616	.814	.791	.797	.533
C/D. Sympathy/Refuge							
Sympathy Jews	.660	.834	.667	.838	.683	.636	.615
Sympathy Israel	.781	.848	.808	.874	.844	.841	.735
Israel as Jewish Refuge	.641	—	.581	—	.630	.703	.656
E. Negative							
Jews Exploit Holocaust	.742	.790	.812	.752	.821	.794	.759
Jews Too Much Influence	.730	.722	.830	.757	.788	.802	.836
Israel as Jewish Refuge	—	.508	—	.549	—	—	—

Note: Principal Component analysis with varimax rotation was used. The table lists the strongest loadings for each item. Thus, the loadings of .716, -.644, and .799 for the Know/Teach items in Austria are the strongest associations for these items and define that factor. The item on Israel as a Jewish refuge appears in two places because of the different way it associates across countries.

Table 11
Attitude Scales
(Means)

	Austria	France	Germany	Poland	Sweden	U.K.	U.S.
A. Know/Teach	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.8	3.2	3.6	3.5
B. Problem/Again	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.8	4.6
C. Sympathy	5.9	5.2	5.7	5.5	5.4	4.9	4.5
D. Sympathy+Refuge	8.4	8.1	8.1	7.8	7.9	7.7	6.9
E. Negative Views	5.2	5.9	5.2	4.7	5.9	5.9	6.0

Notes:

A=Three-item scale (see Table 3) running from 3 for someone who says understanding Holocaust is essential or very important, remembrance should be kept strong, and Holocaust should be taught in schools to 6 for someone who opposes each of these positions.

B=Two-item scale (see Table 4) running from 2 for someone who says another Holocaust was very likely and that anti-Semitism was a very serious problem to 6 for someone who says it that another Holocaust was not very likely and anti-Semitism was not a problem at all.

C=Two-item scale (see Table 5) running from 2 for someone who was very sympathetic toward both Jews and Israel to 10 for someone who was very unsympathetic toward both.

D=Three-item scale (see Tables 5 and 8) running from 3 for someone very sympathetic toward both Jews and Israel and who strongly agrees that the Holocaust makes clear the need for Israel being a Jewish refuge to 15 for someone very unsympathetic toward Jews and Israel and who strongly disagrees about Israel being a Jewish refuge.

E=Two-item scale (see Table 7) running from 2 for someone who strongly agrees that Jews are exploiting the Holocaust and that Jews have too much influence on world events to 8 for someone who strongly disagrees with both.

Table 13 (continued)
Dependent Scales

Independent Variables	Know/ Teach	Problems/ Again	Sympathy	Sympathy+ Refuge	Negative Views
G. United States					
Don't Know+Wrong	-.164/.000	-.064/.091	-.011/.772	-.081/.025	.112/.003
Age	.018/.584	-.078/.027	-.055/.104	-.043/.198	-.094/.007
Education	-.154/.000	-.069/.063	-.012/.735	.029/.423	.027/.474
Know/Teach	—	.083/.021	.240/.000	.244/.000	-.257/.000
r ²	.064	.026	.059	.069	.096

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