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Stalin's Purge and Its Impact on Russian Families

A Pilot Study

KATHARINE G. BAKER and JULIA B. GIPPENREITER

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes a preliminary research project jointly undertaken during the winter of 1993–1994 by a Russian psychologist and an American social worker. The authors first met during KGB's presentation of Bowen Family Systems Theory (BFST) at Moscow State University in 1989. During frequent meetings in subsequent years in the United States and Russia, the authors shared their thoughts about the enormous political and societal upheaval occurring in Russia in the 1990s. The wider context of Russian history in the 20th-century and its impact on contemporary events, on the functioning of families over several generations, and on the functioning of individuals living through turbulent times was central to these discussions.

How did the prolonged societal nightmare of the 1920s and the 1930s affect the population of the Soviet Union? What was the impact of the demented paranoia of those years of totalitarian repression on innocent citizens who tried to live "normal" lives, raise families, go to work, stay healthy, and live out their lives in peace? What was the emotional legacy of Stalin's Purge of 1937–1939 for the children and grandchildren of its victims? Does it continue to have an impact on the functioning of modern-day Russians who are struggling with new societal disruptions during the post-Communist transition to a free-market democracy?

These are the questions that led to the research study presented in this chapter.¹ Fifty grandchildren of Stalin's Purge victims were interviewed in depth about their family experiences: What had happened to their grandparents, when had they found out about it, and what was the impact of these events on their own development and functioning? What was the

¹Preliminary findings of this study appeared under the title "The effects of Stalin's purge on three generations of Russian families," in *Family Systems: A Journal of Natural Systems Thinking in Psychiatry and the Sciences* (Spring/Summer, 1996) 3(1), 5–35.

KATHARINE G. BAKER • 3 Chesterfield Road, Williamburg, Massachusetts 01096. **JULIA B. GIPPENREITER** • Moscow State University, Psychology Faculty, Moscow, Russia 117463.

International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma, edited by Yael Danieli. Plenum Press, New York, 1998.

emotional atmosphere in a family that had experienced “the knock on the door in the middle of the night?” Did the surviving family stay together, or did it break up? What did parents share or hide from their children? How were children affected by knowing that they were “enemies of the people”? How did the family trauma of the Purge compare with other traumatic historical events in Russia, such as the loss of relatives in World War II or the “stagnation” of 20 years of Brezhnevism following Khrushchev’s ouster from leadership in 1964?

The research was grounded in Bowen Family Systems Theory (BFST), which postulates that a multigenerational transmission process provides a continuity of emotional functioning in families, as well as the communication of values and beliefs across generations. According to this theory (Bowen, 1978), those who maintain a sense of connection with past family values, beliefs, and experiences, and have a sense of real relationship with family members who have preceded them, will manage the stresses of their own lives more effectively than those who have drifted away from their families. If this is true, it could have significant implications for societies, families, and individuals who have survived such catastrophic experiences as the Purge, or who may face unknown traumas in the future. The research was undertaken in order to test whether this concept from BFST could be useful in understanding a massive societal rediscovery of its past, as the Soviet archives on the Purge began to open up and the grandchild generation had the opportunity to discover what had really happened two generations ago.

The authors collaborated in planning the research, identifying a sample for interviews, creating a questionnaire, training Russian graduate students of psychology to conduct the interviews, analyzing the data that came from the interviews, and writing reports of the findings. The effort has been a beginning attempt to understand some of the madness that swept through all levels of Soviet society more than 50 years ago and has left scars that may never completely heal in millions of families.

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The period in the Soviet Union between the two world wars has been the subject of an extensive literature in history and political science (e.g., Arendt, 1966; Conquest, 1990; Daniels, 1985; Gleason, 1995; Malia, 1994; Treadgold, 1995; Tucker, 1971; Ulam, 1989; Volkogonov, 1992; etc.). Stalin had inherited the Bolshevik Revolution from Lenin after Lenin’s untimely death from a stroke in 1924. Shortly after his first stroke in 1921, Lenin had composed a “Testament” in which he expressed his thoughts on leadership succession in the Communist Party in the new Soviet Union. In Lenin’s view, his two most talented deputies were Leon Trotsky and Joseph Stalin, but Lenin had reservations about Stalin because he had “concentrated an enormous power in his hands,” and Lenin was not sure that Stalin would use this power with “sufficient caution” (Conquest, 1990, p. 4). This was a strange reservation from the man who had expanded Karl Marx’s concept of proletarian revolution to include the violent overthrow of the Romanov dynasty and the establishment of a “dictatorship of the proletariat” through one-party rule. But Lenin knew how tenuous Communist Party control really was in the Soviet Union in the early 1920s, and he had even initiated a new economic policy (NEP) in which a limited return to a free market economy was permitted in order to assuage the wrath of a disrupted and exhausted Russian population still suffering from the losses of World War I, the Revolution, and a protracted civil war, which had only begun to wind down in 1921.

During the period between Lenin’s death and the start of World War II, a vicious succession struggle took place in which millions of people died as Stalin established his control over

the government apparatus, the Party, and through "collectivization" of the relatively affluent stratum of the agricultural population (*kulaki*). In an attempt to root out all manifestations of Trotskyism, tracking down Trotsky himself and ultimately having him murdered in Mexico in 1941, Stalin generated nationwide waves of hysteria that led to massive societal xenophobia, paranoia, and denunciations, culminating in the Great Purge from 1937 to 1939. During the Purge, millions were arrested as "enemies of the people," tortured, sent to concentration camps in Siberia, or instantly shot. Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 slowed the fervor of the Purge, but it picked up again after the war with new denunciations of those who had "cooperated" with the Germans while interned in German prisoner-of-war camps. The Purge only truly ended with Stalin's death in March 1953.

For many Sovietologists, the Purge can only be explained as the madness of a single man, Joseph Stalin. Conquest (1990) describes the process by which "Stalin's blows were struck at every form of solidarity and comradeship outside of that provided by personal allegiance to himself" (p. 255). Conquest holds Stalin responsible for taking on "the disintegration of family loyalty" (p. 252) as a conscious aim: "In cold blood, quite deliberately and unprovokedly, . . . [he] started a new cycle of suffering" (p. 251). Conquest further notes that "Stalinist totalitarianism on the whole automatically encouraged the mean and malicious. The carriers of personal or office feuds, the poison-pen letter writers, who are a minor nuisance in any society, flourished and increased" (p. 253). Conquest not only holds Stalin personally responsible for the Purge but also describes a kind of mass hysteria in which "lunatic denunciations" rolled like waves throughout the society, through widening circles of colleagues, acquaintances, and neighbors, to envelop the entire society in a mass terror. Although the purges started out in the Party, "by mid-1937 practically the entire population was potential Purge fodder. Few can have failed to wonder if their turn had come" (p. 258).

Arendt (1966) comments that "drunkenness and incompetence . . . loom large in any description of Russia in the twenties and thirties" (p. xi), and she also describes the

gigantic criminality of the Stalin regime which, after all, did not consist merely in the slander and murder of a few hundred or thousand prominent political and literary figures, whom one may 'rehabilitate' posthumously, but in the extermination of literally untold millions of people whom no one, not even Stalin, could have suspected of 'counter-revolutionary' activities. (p. xiii).

She notes further that it was Stalin's personal ruthlessness that introduced "into Bolshevism the same contempt for the Russian people that the Nazis showed toward the Germans" (p. 249). But beyond Stalin, Arendt describes the absolutism of totalitarianism in which the individual becomes

submerged in the stream of dynamic movement of the universal itself. In this stream the difference between ends and means evaporates together with the personality, and the result is the monstrous immorality of ideological policies. All that matters is embodied in the moving movement itself; every idea, every value has vanished into a welter of superstitious pseudoscientific immanence. (p. 249)

Malia (1994) also addresses the sociopolitical system of Stalinist socialism in attempting to understand the Purge. He observes that "the need to salvage something of Stalinism will endure so long as belief exists in the instrumental program of integral socialism—namely, the end of private property, which was achieved for the first time in history under Stalin" (p. 229). He also describes an underlying purpose for the Purge as an attempt to bring all thought and art into the "totalizing logic" of the political system.

As described by Hochschild (1994), the Purge went beyond other human maladies in its scope:

The Purge . . . seems almost totally unfamiliar. It went beyond ideology, beyond reason, beyond factional strife, and beyond even the self-interest of the Soviet Union's rulers. So many engineers and managers were killed that the economy slowed down; so many railway workers were killed that trains failed to run; so many Red Army officers were killed that, a few years later, the Soviets almost lost World War II. The Great Purge reached the realm of madness. (p. 96)

Hochschild (1994) also compares the Purge to the great witch-hunts of early modern Europe. He comments that

part of the problem of explaining mass hysteria is that it has momentum: any outbreak seems quickly to become independent of the causes that triggered it. The hysteria touches an inflammable part of the human psyche, which, once ignited, is hard to put out. Belief in a devil can be as attractive as belief in a god. Even in the best of times, we have plenty of nameless frustrations and fears it is useful to have someone to blame for. And so mass hysteria takes on a seductive life of its own once a class of scapegoats for all problems is officially designated: Witches! Enemies of the people! Off with their heads! The contagion then often lasts long after the specific fears that caused it have disappeared or been replaced by others. (p. 172)

Contemporary Russian fiction also attempts to provide some explanation for the events of the interwar period. Vassily Aksyonov, a Russian writer whose parents were Purge victims, speaks through a 1930s character in his historical novel *Generations of Winter* (1945):

All of modern Russian history looks like a series of breakers—waves of retribution. The February Revolution was retribution for our ruling aristocracy's arrogance and narrow-minded immovability in relation to the people. The October Revolution and the Civil War were retribution against the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia for their obsessive summons to revolution, for the stirring up of the masses. Collectivization and the campaign against the kulaks were retribution against the peasants for their cruelty in the Civil War, for beating up clergymen, for the bloodthirsty anarchism. The current purges are retribution against the revolutionaries for the violence they wreaked upon the peasants. . . . As for the future, it's impossible to predict. (268)

Primary source materials from survivors of the Purge have exploded in the former Soviet Union in recent years and have provided validation for this research. These memoirs and fictional accounts (e.g., Adamova-Sliozberg, 1993; Babel, 1969; Chukovskaya, 1994; Forche, 1993; Ginzburg, 1967; Grossman, 1972; Mandelstam, 1970, 1972; Razgon, 1989; Shalamov, 1982; Solzhenitsyn, 1992; Tertz, 1960, 1989; Vilyenskiy, 1989; Volkov, 1989) describe the authors' personal experiences during the Purge, in concentration camps and in exile.

The memoir literature is very similar to verbal accounts given by this study's subjects with regard to events around the arrest and the subsequent fate of Purge victims in their own families. Both in the memoirs and in the research, the majority of those arrested were men. They were Party leaders, officers of the Tsar's army who had joined the Red Army, priests, scientists, engineers, railroad workers, Komintern officials, managers of plants and construction companies, ministers of the NKVD (secret police), and people with relatives abroad. Usually, the victims believed that the arrest was an error and that they would return home very soon. Yet most of those who were arrested were never again seen by their wives and children.

The arrests usually took place during the night. In some cases, most commonly when neighbors or colleagues had already been arrested, the victims and their families knew that ar-

rest was imminent and tried to prepare for it. Many adults and children reported sleepless nights and an intense atmosphere of fear. A car, or sometimes a disguised commercial van, would park in the street in front of the building. Several officers of the NKVD would knock on the door, enter (usually without resistance from the family), and show an arrest order. There was a general search of the apartment that ignored family reactions (Remnick, 1993). Then, the victim was taken away. What he was permitted to take with him depended on the whims of the arresting officers. Small items such as toothbrushes were sometimes permitted, while extra sweaters may have been forbidden.

Aksyonov (1995) describes the atmosphere in families during the period when the arrests were taking place:

It was only at night that fear began to creep along the streets; scores of Black Marias emerged from the iron gates of the Lubyanka [the central Moscow prison where political prisoners were taken for interrogation and torture] and drove to different buildings throughout the city. All in Moscow averted their eyes at the sight of these vans, the same way any man drives the thought of the inevitability of death from his mind. Please, God, don't let them come for me, or any of our family—ah, thank the Lord, they've passed by! The Black Marias stopped where the orders said they were supposed to, and the agents of the secret police entered homes unhurriedly. The sound of footfalls on the stairs or the noise of an elevator rising in the middle of the night became the habitual background of Moscow's nocturnal terror. People pressed close to the doors of their communal apartments and trembled in their rooms. "They aren't coming to our floor, are they?" "No, they're going higher. . . ." Sometimes in the home of the arrestee there would be sobbing—muffled, suppressed, of course, at first, but turning into hysteria that was unseemly in Soviet society but still very much alive. (p. 178)

The female Purge victims were most commonly arrested because they were the wives of arrested men (see, e.g., Adamova-Sliozberg, 1993; Ginzburg, 1967; Vilyenskiy, 1989). Very few women were arrested independently. If both parents were arrested, their children were often cared for by relatives or sent to special orphanages. Grandmothers were important to the survival of many of these children. Children over 18 were often sent into exile. Some younger children were permitted to join their mothers in exile after their mothers were released from the camps.

Male Purge victims were usually shot immediately after they were arrested or sent directly to concentration camps, where large numbers died because of conditions there. Their families usually did not know for many years what had happened to them or where they were (see, e.g., Akhmatova's *Requiem* in Forche, 1993, p. 101). Families of the men who were shot immediately were told that the sentence had been "10 years without the right to correspondence." After the general amnesty in 1956, families learned that this sentence was a euphemism for the men having been shot. Occasionally, after World War II, families were sent further misinformation about relatives who had been purged. Only later did they learn that they had been told lies.

Few Purge victims ever returned to western Russia (Grossman, 1972). Those who did return to the west after the war were usually rearrested at the end of the 1940s and remained in the camps until the general amnesty in 1956 (Adamova-Sliozberg, 1993; Volkov, 1989). Before their rearrest, Purge victims were forbidden to live with their families in large cities (Grossman, 1972). They met their families surreptitiously and secretly, while anxiously awaiting rearrest at any moment.

Surviving family members of Purge victims were often evicted from their apartments by the State. They were also fired from the jobs, expelled from universities and the Komsomol

(Communist Youth League), and often were unable to find employment. Highly qualified children of Purge victims were turned down by universities. They were officially labeled “Members of Families of Betrayers of the Fatherland” (Ch-S-I-R), or children of “Enemies of the People” (VNs). Being the family of a VN “carried a great stigma, and sometimes meant prison for the wife and an orphanage for the children” (Hochschild, 1994, p. 13). Between 1949 and 1950, some of the grown children of Purge victims were arrested in a campaign called Fragments (*Oscolki*), which aimed to collect and eliminate the remaining family members of Purge victims. After Stalin’s death and the 1956 amnesty, many members of these families still had difficulty getting jobs.

The memoir literature describes a range of reactions among family members of the Purge victims. The spouses of Purge victims were generally despairing and frightened, and they withdrew from social contact. Friends and relatives avoided them. Sometimes politically secure friends would continue to visit or help, but this was the exception. Some families tried to use high-level political connections to try to protect themselves, but this could be risky for the helpers. Most families tried to hide the fact that a relative had been arrested. Sometimes families did not tell their very young children the truth about what had happened to a missing relative. Children and grandchildren born after the Purge might be told that their father or grandfather had died in the War. Usually, the surviving spouses raised their children alone. Some remarried when they had not heard from a purged husband for many years. If he then returned from prison camp after the general amnesty in 1956, wives faced terrible dilemmas of loyalty, love, and family definition (Grossman, 1972).

The children of VNs also suffered from profound identity confusion. Young men whose parents had been arrested would volunteer for the Front during the war in order to demonstrate their loyalty and innocence. Children of the VNs tried to avoid joining Communist Party organizations because they were frightened that they would be questioned about their families’ political organizations because they were frightened that they would be questioned about their families’ political reliability. Daughters of the VNs would try to marry when very young in order to change their names, but they often had trouble finding suitors. Prospective husbands (who were not the sons of VNs) wanted to “keep their resumes clean.” If they married these young women, they would share the social-political shame of their wives and could themselves be vulnerable to political repression at the end of the 1940s.

The experiences of the grandchildren of Purge victims have so far not been explored in the memoir literature. Reference is sometimes made to a family’s Purge experiences, but these family histories have not been linked with contemporary issues for members of the grandchild generation who are now establishing their own families.

THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Bowen Family Systems Theory was chosen as the theoretical foundation for this research project because it provides a useful framework for understanding family functioning across several generations. BFST addresses aspects of variability in human functioning within family relationship systems. These concepts are not culture-bound, but apply to some extent to all members of the species. The study used two principal concepts from BFST: (1) the multigenerational transmission process and (2) cutoff.

The BFST concept of the multigenerational transmission process describes fluctuations in functioning and emotional relationships through the generations of a family. As described by Kerr and Bowen (1988), BFST “assumes that individual differences in functioning and

multigenerational trends in functioning reflect an orderly and predictable relationship process that connects the functioning of family members across generations" (p. 224). Variations in the functioning of family members are usually not dramatically discrepant over such a brief period as three generations, although "every family, given sufficient generations, tends to produce people at both functional extremes and people at most points on a continuum between these extremes" (p. 221). Anxiety and other behavioral and emotional patterns are transmitted from one generation to the next through relationships between grandparents, parents, and grandchildren.

This study looks at Russian families across three generations, including grandparents, parents, and grandchildren, but its interview subjects were drawn from the grandchild generations. According to BFST, the functioning of the grandchild generation in present-day Russia would be fairly consistent with patterns of family response to prior historic catastrophes such as the Great Purge. Families that had maintained a stable level of functioning during and after the Purge might be expected to produce grandchildren who would manage themselves effectively in post-Soviet Russia. Families that were unstable in the aftermath of the Purge might be expected to produce lower functioning grandchildren.

"Cutoff" is a component of the multigenerational transmission process. It describes the nature of connection across generations in a family. It can be part of vertical relationships between generations, as well as of horizontal relationships within the same generation. It is part of the natural process in which children move toward autonomy in relation to their parents, so that they can establish their own adult families and reproduce (Illick, 1993). Cutoff can be geographic or physical, as when family members move away from each other and lose touch. It can be also be emotional. Intense emotional cutoff is defined as a complete emotional withdrawal from important family members, which is driven by anxiety. Kerr and Bowen (1988) note that "people cut off from their families of origin to reduce the discomfort generated by being in emotional contact with them" (p. 271). In the opinion of these authors, cutoff may also be driven by societal forces that make family connection dangerous and may even threaten family survival.

Cutoff is associated with a wide range of human functioning. Mild cutoff is a part of a natural movement toward autonomy between generations. Some cutoff may represent a responsible effort to cope with internal family stressors. Intense emotional cutoff, however, can be said to be pathogenic and is associated with the more severe human psychological, social, and chronic physiological problems. In other words, families that manage anxiety through distancing from each other tend to be vulnerable to a variety of symptoms. Families that manage anxiety through a balance of autonomy and connection across generations tend to have fewer severe problems (Kerr & Bowen, 1988, p. 271). The relationship between cutoff and functioning is not causal or linear, but there is a strong association between the two factors.

In the Soviet Union during the 1930s, cutting off from family members who had been purged was often the most "sensible" course of action. Purge victims had been physically removed from their families through arrest, imprisonment, torture, assassination, and exile. The state then declared it a crime for family members to maintain relationships with these VNs. In addition, the family members themselves were cut off from the wider society, since they were officially labeled "relatives of VNs." In response to these State policies, many changed their names, went into hiding, and never mentioned their purged relatives again. But others kept the memories of lost family members alive and retained a sense of pride in those memories in spite of State policies.

The central hypothesis of this research was that cutoff was a pathogenic force for families of Purge victims. It was hypothesized that families who cut off physically or emotionally from their purged relatives during the late 1930s would manifest lower functioning in the

grandchild generation. A related hypothesis was that avoidance of cutoff could provide a buffer against societal trauma. In other words, maintaining a sense of connection with lost family members could enhance the functioning of succeeding generations. The study proposed that an internal continuity of family identity, values, and beliefs across three generations might enhance the functioning of grandchildren living under the stressful conditions of Russian society in the 1990s.

A correlate of BFST hypothesizes that human societies, like human families, function along a continuum. At the lowest end of the continuum are extremely regressed societies that are unable to take care of their members, have ineffective leadership and chaotic internal structures, and are in conflict with their neighbors and the natural environment. At the highest end of the continuum are societies that are able to promote optimal functioning in their members, have orderly internal structures and processes for decision making and productivity, and exist in harmony with their neighbors and the natural environment.

At a societal level, cutoff could manifest itself externally in foreign relations or internally in the society's connection with its own history. According to BFST, a society that truly knows, understands, and maintains a connection with its own past (including both good and bad events) will most effectively manage the social, economic, and political challenges it confronts in the present and future. This aspect of BFST is particularly relevant to present-day Russia as it begins to open up the archives from the Soviet period and acknowledge the events of its past.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

The investigators utilized both probability and nonprobability sampling in selecting grandchildren of Purge victims for interviews. The total population for the study included all the grandchildren of all the millions of people arrested, tortured, killed, or imprisoned in the Soviet Union between 1937 and 1939. Because random sampling of this vast group was impractical, nonprobability or convenience sampling was used to identify an accessible subgroup of the population. The sample population that was selected consisted of grandchildren of Purge victims who were directly or indirectly associated with Memorial.

Memorial (Adler, 1993) is a Russian nongovernmental organization established in 1987 in order to erect a monument to the victims of the Purge. It quickly became a repository for information about these victims. Originally, it was a grassroots organization. But after the end of the Soviet Union in 1991, Memorial was officially registered with the Russian government and began to receive some government support. Its central office is in Moscow, but it has branch offices throughout the former Soviet Union. A high percentage of its members are the daughters and grandchildren of Purge victims.

The investigators wrote a letter to the director of Memorial describing the proposed study and requesting access to Memorial's membership list. The director reacted positively to the request and provided names, addresses, telephone numbers, ages, and other demographic information about its membership.

Within this convenience sample, the investigators used a stratified random sampling method to identify 50 subjects who were grandchildren of Purge victims. All were born between 1948 and 1958, had university or technical institute education, and currently lived in Moscow. An even number of men and women were selected. The decision to control for these variables was made for a number of reasons. Moscow was chosen for convenience in conducting the interviews. Subjects between the ages of 35 and 45 were chosen because they would have had time to establish their own families. About half were born before Stalin's death in

1953, and about half were born after. Approximately the same number of males and females were chosen in order to facilitate male–female comparisons. Nearly all of the subjects were university educated, since it was assumed that they would be optimally thoughtful about their family life experience.

Although controlling for these variables limits the generalizability of the study's findings, the investigators believe that the positive aspects of the selection protocol outweighed most disadvantages for the purpose of a small pilot study.

METHODOLOGY

Using an *ex post facto* design with in-depth interviews from a questionnaire as the data collection and measurement instrument, the investigators and their assistants interviewed 50 grandchildren of Purge victims in Moscow during the winter of 1993–1994. The research focused on the variation in family response to the Purge and on how this variation had manifested itself in the grandchild generation. There was no control group, but comparisons were made within the sample.

Four interviewers² were selected from among the psychology graduate students of coinvestigator Julia Gippenreiter. Gippenreiter was the fifth interviewer. Each interviewer interviewed 10 subjects. The interviewers were trained by Gippenreiter and Baker in Moscow in October 1993. The training included a detailed review of the questionnaire, with a focus on the significance of each question; an explanation of Bowen theory and its relevance for the study; and techniques for interviewing, including neutrality, encouragement of response to open-ended questions, and coding. Interviewers conducted test interviews before contacting study subjects. In addition, all interviewers practice-interviewed the same subject in order to test for interrater reliability.

Through in-depth interviews, the study gathered subjective observations, memories, general information, and measures of self-reported present functioning of the subjects. The subjects were asked about their factual knowledge of the events of the Purge and the experiences of their grandparents and parents at that time. They also reported their own emotional “memories” of those events (e.g., fear), as transmitted to them through their parents. They described their relationships with their parents and grandparents, their parents' and grandparents' values and guiding principles, and how these had or had not been incorporated into their own lives. Through these interviews, the study attempted to discover the multigenerational process of transmission of values, guiding principles, behaviors, coping mechanisms, and the ability to utilize resources, as well as relationship and emotional patterns. It also attempted to understand the reciprocal, three-way nature of the grandparent–parent–grandchild relationship system.

The Research Instrument

The data collection instrument, created by the coinvestigators in Washington, D.C., and Moscow, was a 58-item Russian-language interview questionnaire that included both closed and open-ended questions (see Appendix). The interviews were used to gather two kinds of responses: (1) objective information, such as dates, health status, education, and profession of the subjects, their parents, and grandparents; and (2) subjective information, such as the

²The authors appreciate the assistance of G. N. Vorobyevaya, A. A. Rudakov, M. L. Soroka, and A. V. Terentyevaya, who conducted in-depth interviews with the study subjects.

subjects' satisfaction with their career and life, attitudes' toward the future, and relationships with family members.

The interviews included four categories of questions: (1) basic demographic information; (2) questions relating to the functioning of the subject, his or her parents, and grandparents; (3) questions relating to the guiding principles of the subject; and (4) questions relating to the subject's degree of cutoff from the grandparent generation. Questions relating to functioning included such areas as physical and psychological health, marital status, education, and career path. Cutoff was measured through an assessment of how much the grandchildren knew about their grandparents.

Conduct of Interviews

Gippenreiter first established contact with the parents of the selected subjects, explained the research, and asked for help in contacting their children. The interviewers then telephoned the subjects directly, described the research, and arranged interview appointments. Interviews took place in the subject's apartment or office, or the interviewer's apartment. The interviews ranged from 50 minutes to 4 hours; the average length of the interviews was 1 hour and 20 minutes.

There was a range of responses to the interviews. Some subjects were formal, distant, nervous, and cautious during the interviews, showing anxiety about the "correctness" of their answers. Almost all of them became intensely emotionally involved in their responses to the questions. Many subjects smoked continuously. Several became flushed and exhibited dermatological splotches on the face and neck during the interview. Several subjects wanted to receive the results of the study when it was completed.

The interviewers coded the subjects' responses immediately following each interview. Answers were grouped into the four categories that reflected the hypotheses of the study: demographic information, functioning, guiding principles, and cutoff. Answers to questions that were relevant to more than one category were coded as responses in each relevant category. In coding the open-ended questions, the interviewers developed additional variables to identify varying family responses to the Purge, including material and career loss, anxiety, adherence to moral values, and the active search for information about the Purge and family members who were purged. This coding of open-ended variables was reviewed by a panel of BFST experts to establish its validity. Additional composite variables were developed during the data-analysis process.

FINDINGS

Initial data analysis was done in Moscow in the spring of 1994. Replication, follow-up analysis, and further extension of the findings were completed in Washington, D.C., in the summer.³

Frequencies

Simple frequencies were run on all descriptive variables. Variation within the sample was described in a number of specific areas. The *professions* of the subjects reflected their high level of education. Ninety-two percent described their work as "professional," while 2% de-

³The authors would like to express appreciation to Susan A. Weigert, M.A. (Washington, D.C.), A. N. Rudakov, and A. T. Terekhin (Moscow) for assistance in data analysis, and to the Georgetown Family Center for providing computer support.

scribed themselves as supervisors and managers, and 4% as engineers. Fifty-six percent were *only children*, 34% were the oldest, and 10% were the youngest. There were no middle children among the subjects. This is an accurate reflection of the small family size in this generation in the Soviet Union. Eighty-two percent of the subjects had *lived with a grandparent* while they were growing up, and of those, 83% had lived with the grandparent for more than 3 years. Eighty-eight percent of the subjects were *married*, with 68% of those married only once. Twenty-eight percent had divorced and remarried. None was widowed. Forty-four percent of the subjects lost one or more close relatives in *World War II*. About half of the family members lost were grandparents. Thirty percent of the subjects' fathers were deceased, but all the mothers were alive at the time the study was conducted. Sixteen percent of the subjects had been *members of the Communist Party*, and 12% of those were Party functionaries. Ninety-six percent of the subjects *lived in a household with other people*. Nearly 80% lived with a spouse or other partner. Forty percent lived with their mother. Seventy-four percent had four or five people in their household. Seventy percent of the subjects had *children*; of those, about 60% had only one child. Twenty-eight percent were sufficiently optimistic about the future in Russia to have had a child born in the past year or to have made plans to have another child. The *Purge victims* in the subjects' families included maternal grandfather (86%), maternal grandmother (34%), paternal grandfather (20%), and paternal grandmother (8%). This discrepancy between paternal and maternal victims apparently reflects the membership of Memorial, which includes a high percentage of daughters of Purge victims. Relatively few of the subjects' parents (4% of the fathers and 14% of the mothers) had been purged, since they were too young in the late 1930s to be involved in politics. Two subjects reported that four family members (both maternal grandparents and both parents) had been victims of the Purge. Six subjects reported that three family members had been purged, and 10 subjects reported that two members had been purged.

Seventy percent of the maternal grandfathers and 50% of the paternal grandfathers were shot immediately following their arrest. A majority of the grandfathers who were not killed did not return to their families even after the amnesty of the 1950s, since they were forbidden to enter the large western cities where most of their families lived (see Grossman, 1972, for a description of this experience). Most of the purged grandmothers were deported, imprisoned, or sent to concentration camps. None of the arrested grandmothers in the study was shot, but 18% of them died in the camps or in exile. Most of the grandmothers survived the camps and exile until the amnesty of 1956, and then returned to western Russia to reconnect with their children and grandchildren, passing on to them their living memory of the experience of the Purge.

Factor Analysis

Based on the original hypothesis of the study, the principal variables that were analyzed were (1) cutoff, and (2) functioning in the grandchild generation. An additional variable that emerged from responses to the interview questions measured the subjects' degree of loyalty to the Soviet regime.

In order to identify the most useful subset of variables for the data analysis, the researchers performed factor analysis and cluster analysis using average linking and dendograms of questionnaire items. The results suggested a 10-factor model to describe the principal variables.

Through the use of computer-generated dendograms, a large number of related variables were clustered to produce composite variables for cutoff and functioning. These clusters formed two separate groups of highly correlated variables for cutoff and functioning. Cutoff divided into two variables: *maternal-line cutoff* and *paternal-line cutoff*. Maternal-line cutoff

was measured by the subjects' knowledge of basic demographic information about their mothers' families, as well as their knowledge of the Purge and of family memories. Paternal-line cutoff was measured by the subjects' knowledge of basic demographic information about their fathers' families, including knowledge about prior generations.

The same cluster-analysis procedure was followed for variables measuring functioning. These variables also divided into two highly correlated groups: (1) basic functioning, which included the number of marriages, divorces, general health, and physical and psychological symptoms; and (2) social functioning, which included financial stability, standard of living, and other social variables.

The third major variable, loyalty to the Soviet regime, was also divided into two subvariables through cluster analysis. The first group measured *active protest* against the Soviet regime, including a range of protest activities, motivations for engaging in those activities (ranging from impulsive decision to a struggle for personal rights), and family stories of the Purge victims. The second group of loyalty variables measured *passive protest* against the regime, including not joining the Communist Party and not receiving the special privileges granted to Party members.

The two cutoff variables (maternal- and paternal-line cutoff) were then analyzed in relation to the Purge on the mother's and father's sides of the family. Interestingly, the phenomenon of grandchild cutoff from grandparents was *not* associated with whether the grandparents had been purged. The authors had anticipated that the grandchildren might be more cut off from the side of the family that had been purged. However, it appears that cutoff, as a family relationship phenomenon, was rooted in factors other than the political-historical experience of the Purge. There was, however, a significant difference between the degree of cutoff in the maternal and paternal family lines, with grandchildren reporting more cutoff from their father's line than from their mother's line.

Another interesting finding related to differences in the parent and grandchild generations with regard to passive and active protest against the Soviet regime. The grandchildren were more likely than their parents to be engaged in protest activities. In addition, a significantly higher number of women than men in all generations were *passively* disloyal to the Soviet system (e.g., through not joining the Communist Party). A significantly higher number of women than men in the parent generation (mothers of subjects) were *actively* disloyal and took more personal risks in opposing the Soviet system.

Open-Ended Responses

Each interview concluded with two open-ended questions that were intended to encourage the subjects to express their thoughts in greater detail. The questions posed were these: (1) Do you think there are any connections between the events your family experienced in the period of the Purge at the end of the 1930s and the way your life developed for you? (2) Have you been actively involved in collecting information about your family members who were victims of the Purge?

Sense of Connectedness to the Purge. The following excerpts came from the wide range of responses to the first of the two open-ended questions: "positive influence on my personality," "inherited moral values from my grandparent," "a feeling of support from my family roots," "a critical relationship toward the totalitarian regime," "psychological problems such as anxiety, fear, and mistrust," and "impediments to my career development." Through cluster and factor analysis, these diverse responses were divided into four groups: those who saw the

Purge as having had a negative influence, positive influence, mixed negative and positive influence, or no influence on their own lives. Table 1 presents the distribution of responses to this question.

Negative Influence. Among the subjects who felt that the Purge at the end of the 1930s had a negative influence on their own lives were the following:

A 37-year-old doctor who lived with her husband, two children, and her mother. Her maternal grandfather, an officer, had been a victim of the Purge. Only the previous year, the family had learned that he had been shot without any charges being brought against him. His wife was German. The subject's mother, who was 18 years old at the time her father was purged, remembered being anxious and not sleeping the night of her father's arrest. They were awaiting the arrest, because all the other military people in the building had already been arrested. After the arrest, the family was evicted from their apartment, and the daughter was expelled from the university. She soon married (in order to change her name), but her husband volunteered for the Front and was killed in the first month of the War. Her second marriage, in order to escape persecution and starvation, was to the son of an NKVD official. After divorcing him, she married again. The subject (the granddaughter of the Purge victim) said, "I knew that I should not talk about my family with other people, although I was born in the year of Rehabilitation, 1956. I haven't gotten rid of this feeling even now. I know that I could find myself in the same situation [that is, a purge could occur again in Russia]."

A 40-year-old artist, who lived with her husband and daughter in Moscow, said, "The influence [of the Purge] is deep in my character. I can't take any initiative for myself. I am afraid. I fear official relationships. When *perestroika* began, I thought that all active people would [eventually] be arrested, all the same, or shot."

A 37-year-old librarian and translator, living with her husband, daughter, and mother, said: "There is some kind of anxiety in me. In this country, anything can happen to you. It's a kind of genetic memory for the Soviet people and for Jewish people."

A 42-year-old engineer described how her maternal grandfather was purged. He was sent into exile in 1923, and from that time on, his wife lived in different exile locations until she died in 1935. Her grandfather was shot in 1937. An uncle and aunt took the two children (one of whom was the subject's mother) and raised them after their mother's death. The subject said, "In the family, fear remains and also the impossibility of learning anything about our relatives. This had a great impact on the nervous system. All family members are closed, with heavy characters. My mother is very hypersensitive about these issues. My father was not able to work in his field, although he is very talented."

A 38-year-old teacher, who lives with his wife and daughters, said, "Yes, of course the Purge has affected me. If my grandfather were still alive, he would have had a much higher position. My mother had been studying and getting A's, but she was not accepted at law school. In my life, problems escalated and have increased like an avalanche."

**Table 1. Subjects' Perception of
How the Purge Influenced
Their Own Lives**

Negative influence	40%
Positive influence	26%
Mixed influence	18%
No influence	16%

A 39-year-old man, an alcoholic and former Komsomol functionary, had been married three times, divorced three times, and was living alone. He and his maternal grandparents were Party members. His father was also an alcoholic. The subject said, "Everything would be different if my grandmother and grandfather had not been purged. My parents would be living in a different way and relationships would be different. I would be different. It influenced my decisions in the field of political activity. Sometimes I couldn't afford to be active—for example, in the Komsomol, since I knew that my grandfather had been purged. He was rehabilitated, but all the same, at that time, the attitude toward this event was not very good. I had problems getting access to secret information. I tried not to be very active on the whole. There was a closedness and fear in the whole family that someone would reveal something by blabbing it [speaking out]. All questions about the Purge were discussed only inside the family and were kept quiet. When I was small, they did not trust me. About my grandfather I knew from my mother but not directly. We never discussed the political situation in the country in our family. I always had to conceal who my grandmother and grandfather were. I had always been controlling myself. This influenced my career and promotion in my work."

A 43-year-old manager of a trade firm lived with her husband, son, and mother. Her maternal grandfather, a vice-minister, was purged in 1938. He was sent to prison camp and then was exiled; he returned after 16 years (in 1954) and died of cancer in 1974. The subject's father refused to marry the subject's mother because her father (the subject's maternal grandfather) was an "Enemy of the People." The subject said, "There is a connection, of course. My mother and I graduated from university very late—in our 30s and 40s. It didn't go normally for us. The Purge disrupted our education and our social standard of living. If grandfather had not been taken, we would have had a much higher position."

Positive Influence. In answering the question about what connection they saw between the tragic events their family experienced during the Purge and the way their own life developed, about one in four subjects described ways in which those events had a positive influence on their lives.

A 35-year-old man said, "Yes, there was an influence, not in the material sense, but in the spiritual sense. It had an impact on my understanding of values in my life, close people, and the meaning of life. I have the feeling that I should tell people about my grandmother and give her [memoirs] to people to read. I have a feeling that I should be worthy of her memory. When I come to a moral turning point or choice, then the very choice of my grandmother and her life help me to come to a moral decision. That has become very simple and natural for me. If I were to lose material possessions because of my decision, these losses would not be comparable to the material losses people in the camps had undergone. They lost a lot, but they saved their spiritual sense of self-worth. They are a moral model for me. I have the impression that the choice between the spiritual or pragmatic way of raising children is getting more and more challenging. We have to have very strong family roots in order that one should not think too much while bringing up children in the atmosphere of the Russian intelligentsia. Many people do not know what spiritual joy means. A person who knows it already has understood that everything else is worthless in comparison."

A 44-year-old Jewish radiophysicist lives with his wife and son. His maternal grandfather, who had been the chief engineer of a factory, was a victim of the Purge. He left behind a wife and three daughters. In the evacuation during the war, their relatives helped a lot because they were all together. The subject lived with his grandmother from birth until age 18. His father was a disabled World War II veteran who graduated from law school. In 1948–1949, the family lost their apartment in Moscow, and lost their permits to live in Moscow, because of the

Doctors' Plot (both the subject's grandmother and an aunt were doctors; the Doctors' Plot was an anti-Semitic drive launched by Stalin shortly before his death). Until 1956, they lived outside Moscow and worked only occasionally at part-time, temporary jobs. In 1956, they were allowed to return to Moscow to live in a communal apartment. The subject's father later published two books and received the title "Honored Lawyer" and a personal pension from the republic. The subject said, "I think, yes, there is an influence. If there are no hardships, I wouldn't be protected from being spoiled by corruption through the privileges my father had (nor would he). My father would say that because he was a good professional, he got what he deserved, but he never took advantage of his right as a disabled World War II veteran. For example, he did not break the line in purchasing a car. He could give up his vacation ticket for the sanitarium. This hard life and the losses he experienced made my father wise in perceiving life and its circumstances. In electricity, the current may pass along an electromagnetic field through an electric wire or through air. In our family it passed through air."

A 37-year-old engineer lived with his grandmother until he was 14. His father, a colonel in the Red Army, married the daughter of a Purge victim in 1953. The KGB didn't know how to react to this marriage, but nothing happened because it was the year of Stalin's death. The purged grandfather was from a noble family and had been on the faculty of the Military Academy. He had been an officer in the Tsar's army before transferring into the Red Army. His wife (the subject's grandmother) told the subject that her husband was a typical member of the old Russian intelligentsia, with a calm, reserved character. The interview subject said, "Of course, yes. Knowing about my grandfather, I could not understand how such a valuable person who had worked for the system could have been purged by it. In our family, everyone read Solzhenitsyn (even though father was a member of the Communist Party). When I got older, I started to understand what was what and how it could happen; that is, these experiences stimulated the capacity to reflect and search for answers to questions. For this, I read a lot, investigate a lot. I consciously prefer to have a moral orientation. That's the main thing. The same as my grandfather. He was never commercial or materialistic. And my grandmother never had any savings. In our family, there were books, a piano; we spent all our money on things of the spirit."

When asked what losses he experienced because of this, he responded, "A person who stands on moral principles cannot count on material well-being. But if we speak about family losses, I think it couldn't have happened if our country had had a different history. With our history, it would have happened all the same."

In thinking about the influence of the Purge on the country and on himself, the engineer said, "For me, everything is horrible! I consider that the Purge was a catastrophic, awful, inhumane experiment. I try not to read this literature about the Purge and the camps. It leads me to repressed rage. I haven't read all the writings of Solzhenitsyn. I tried to read Shalamov, but I couldn't. I glanced through it but wasn't able to read it. I have a wound that will never heal. It's necessary to find out what they did, and on the whole, I understood and I don't need any more details."

He continued, "It forces me to follow moral principles, especially in our confused time. I have no wish to rush to set up a kiosk or to organize a trading firm. I'll try (at the end of my military service) to work in a field that is interesting to me and is moral in the sense that it creates something (like a documentary film). I also am raising my children based on these same moral principles."

A 45-year-old English teacher lives with her mother, grandmother, husband, her daughter, her husband's daughter, and their son (seven people in all). Her maternal grandfather was purged and spent 15 years in prison. Afterwards, he returned to live with his family. She said, "Our grandfather was everything for me; my love of nature, of Russia, comes from him. We try

to keep our family roots. Suffering creates faith. The system of values in our family is unshakable. More spiritual than material. There was no hate. Our country is important, but not the political system. Grandfather left memoirs. I am looking for an opportunity to publish them.”

Mixed Influence. Other respondents felt the Purge had both a positive and negative influence on their own lives.

A 42-year-old librarian, divorced with no children, lives with her parents. Her maternal grandfather was purged. He was shot when the subject's mother was 19, and she was sent into exile in Kazakhstan. There, she met her husband and married. The subject was born in exile in 1951. Her family lived in an underground cave. Her parents worked under very difficult conditions. As a child, the subject stayed alone with the dog and was frequently sick. She lost her health in childhood. She said, “There were very good people around us who had also been sent into exile. They helped each other a lot. I learned about the Purge from my parents because in exile no one covered up this fact. In a prison cell, a person is free in spirit. A human who goes through this ‘school’ is never caught by materialistic values. In spirit, I am very close to my grandfather. He was very generous, attentive, open to other people, unconcerned with money. In our home there was a ‘grandfather cult.’ We all searched for information about him. On the wall his photograph hangs. Laziness and fear have prevented me from developing my life as I would have wished.”

A 35-year-old divorced engineer lives with her daughter and mother. Her maternal grandfather, the director of a construction firm, was shot in 1938. His wife had divorced him not long before his arrest. She was a doctor and went to the war. He subject lived with her grandmother from age 21 to 24—the last 3 years of her grandmother's life. Her grandmother, her mother, and her father were members of the Party. They did nothing after the war, for which they might have been punished. She said, “It is connected somehow, but I don't think in a serious way. It wasn't directly harmful, because at that time there were no information lists. I was born in 1957, after the rehabilitation began. My grandmother got the documents. But until I was an adolescent, I was told only that my grandfather had died. We had been living mainly by believing in the ‘rosy future’ promised by the government, but it was dangerous to dig out our roots. You could accidentally find out something that you should know—for example, you might run across a *kulak* or a merchant in your roots. It's a pity that I lost information about my great-grandparents. It is unrecoverable now.”

No Influence. Another group of subjects reported that the Purge had no influence on their lives.

A 45-year-old man lives with his wife, two children, and his mother. Formerly a polar pilot, he is now a supervisor in an industrial factory. He is a master of sport (in basketball, the Dynamo team—the old NKVD-KGB team). The subject's maternal grandfather was purged. He knows little about him—only that he was a deputy of Dzerzhinsky (founder of the CHEKA [forerunner of the KGB]). An uncle (his mother's brother) worked in the NKVD. The subject said, “There is absolutely no connection, except for little things. Nobody prevented me from becoming a sportsman. I achieved a master of sport degree and nobody prevented me. No one prevented me from fulfilling my plans.”

A 42-year-old college teacher, a member of the Party, is married with four children. His father was also a Party member. His maternal grandfather, a Comintern officer, was purged. In 1932, he was sent to a prison camp and was shot in 1937. The family was moved to a smaller apartment and closed themselves off because of fear. His grandmother changed her work. Both his mother and grandmother are reserved but get angry very easily (he described them as hav-

ing explosive personalities). His mother hid the Purge, but within the family they talked of it constantly. He himself is quite closed and lives for the family. No photos, no memorabilia exist at home. He has not gathered information about the Purge. Although he lived with his grandmother for 7 years, he knows nothing of his ancestors on either side. The subject said, "I don't feel any harmful influence, except some little sense of disturbance and discomfort. Objectively the Purge did not influence me at all."

A 45-year-old economist lives with her mother and stepfather. She is very sick with thrombosis and lymphostatic disease. Her maternal grandfather was purged, leaving his wife and two children. The children were taken in by their maternal grandparents. The subject's mother (who was 14 when her father was arrested) became a dressmaker who went from house to house. The subject said, "The Purge had no impact at all. My life is completely different from their lives (in previous generations)." She says she knows nothing about the Purge and has not looked at the documentation of her grandfather's rehabilitation.

A 43-year-old Party member lives with his wife and two children. Although he is an engineer/mechanic, he works as a carpenter and is angry because he is not working at the level of his education. His paternal grandfather, a Party member and an accountant, was purged. According to the subject, his grandfather was socially an "insignificant person." His grandmother, who is still alive, was very frightened; she married for the second time in her fifties. The subject never lived with her. His father, also a Party member and vice-chief engineer, survived because of his Party membership. The subject said, "There is no connection. If my grandfather had lived, nothing would be different. He was too small a person. . . . No, I did not investigate what happened in the Purge, since I'm not interested."

A 43-year-old music teacher hates her work. She lives with lots of Siamese cats. She asked by telephone, "What privilege will I get for doing the interview?" (She agreed to be interviewed when told she would be paid \$15.) Her maternal grandfather, an engineer, was purged. The subject's mother, a movie actress, said, "Nobody ever knew that I am the daughter of an Enemy of the People, and I am proud that I hid it so well." Recently, her mother had a party at her home. At the party, she asked her friends, "Do you know that you are sitting and eating at the table of an Enemy of the People?" Everyone said, "Congratulations for hiding it so well." The subject said, "There is no connection between the Purge and my present life."

A 36-year-old linguist is married but living alone. He sees his children twice a week. His maternal grandfather, an engineer from a long family line of priests, was arrested in 1932 while he was working on Belomor Kanal. He was arrested again in 1936 and sent to prison, camp, and exile before being granted amnesty in 1956. The subject lived with his rehabilitated grandfather for 8 years. His own father was a Party member, an engineer, and a professor. The subject said, "How could it influence my life? No, it didn't. I can't imagine another life. Evidently, it did not influence me."

Involvement in Purge-Related Research. Another variable, labeled *research effort*,⁴ was developed from an analysis of responses to the final question, which asked the subjects whether they had been actively involved in collecting information about their family members who were victims of the Purge. Responses to this question were coded according to a 5-point scale that reflected a continuum of involvement from *Learning from my parent(s)' investigation* (1 point) to *Searching the KGB archives myself* (5 points).

⁴Research effort as it is used in this study implies an informal personal effort to find out more about the extended family.

Correlations

Table 2 displays the correlation matrix for all the variables derived from cluster and factor analysis, as described earlier. As can be seen, the cutoff variable for *both* family lines (mother's and father's) was highly negatively associated with the derived factor *basic functioning* ($r = -.33$ and $-.40$; $p = .018$ and $.004$, respectively). *Social functioning* was positively associated with extended family research effort ($r = .42$; $p = .002$), active protest ($r = 0.25$; $p = .077$), and positive influence of the Purge ($r = 0.30$; $p = .034$). Research effort was also strongly positively correlated with positive influence of the Purge. Interestingly, passive protest did not correlate with any other factor, possibly because passive protest was so widespread throughout the population that it could not have statistical significance.

Regression Analysis

The outcome of these correlational analyses suggested the advisability of simple linear and multiple regression analysis for evaluating the predictive value of a composite *cutoff* variable for the functioning related variable, basic functioning. Table 3 displays the results of this regression procedure between standardized variables.

The initial hypothesis predicting that higher levels of cutoff would be negatively associated with basic functioning was supported by the results of the regression analysis displayed in Table 3 ($R^2 = .26$, $F = 16.56$, and $p < .0002$). In other words, the more cut off the grandchildren were from their grandparents, the lower their functioning was in certain basic areas, such as health.

Table 2. Correlation Matrix for Variables Derived from Cluster and Factor Analysis

	Basic function	Social function	Cutoff (mother)	Cutoff (father)	Active protest	Passive protest	No effect	Negative effect	Positive effect	Research effort
Basic function										
Social function										
Cutoff (mother)	$p = .018^*$									
Cutoff (father)	$p = .004^*$									
Active protest		$p = .077$								
Passive protest										
No effect		$p = .054$	$p = .000$		$p = .071$					
Negative effect							$p = .002^*$			
Positive effect		$p = .034$								
Research effort		$p = .002^*$	$p = .015$		$p = .001^{**}$		$p = .012$		$p = .000$	

* $p < .01$

** $p < .001$, two-tailed significance

Table 3. Simple Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Basic Functioning

Variable	R^2	F -Ratio for R^2	Significance of F
Cutoff	.26	16.56	.0002

DISCUSSION

The major finding of the study is the strong *negative correlation* between *cutoff* (for both the maternal and paternal lines) and *basic functioning* in the grandchild generation. This finding validates the hypothesis that cutoff is a relationship phenomenon rooted in basic human functioning and is transmitted from one generation to the next. The lack of significant correlation between cutoff and the experience of the Purge raised interesting questions about the nature of cutoff. If emotional cutoff is viewed as a multigenerational family relationship response to anxiety, then many of these families probably *already* used emotional cutoff as a technique for managing anxiety. They would have automatically resorted to cutoff at the time of the Purge in order to manage the intense stress and anxiety of losing a family member under violent circumstances. But other families would *not* have responded in this way to a traumatic family event, because cutoff was not in their emotional response repertoire. But there clearly is not a linear, causal relationship between cutoff and the experience of the Purge.

It may seem paradoxical that the grandchildren's *social functioning* correlates positively with *active protest*, efforts to research a family member's experience of the Purge, and the perception that the Purge had a *positive influence* on their own lives. However, all of these factors indicate energy, purposefulness, and responsibility, which, according to BFST, are associated with higher levels of functioning. Higher functioning families apparently survived the tragedy of the Purge through finding a positive framework for the experience and transmitting this positive view to their grandchildren. Family emotional resources such as courage, firmness in critical situations, the ability to protest actively against social coercion, and a commitment to high moral values and ideals were passed on to the grandchild generation. This pattern in families is also fully congruent with the theories of Satir (1972), who refers to the "nurturing" strength of family roots and the importance of connections across generations.

The special role of women in preserving and passing on family memories came across clearly in the findings. There was less evidence of cutoff from the maternal line than from the paternal line. Daughters of Purge victims seemed to take a more active role than sons in researching family information through their membership in Memorial. Members of the grandchild generation typically reported their grandmothers and mothers as resources and communicators of family memory and tradition. This does not mean that the men in these families were less emotionally involved with their families than the women. In fact, grandfathers were often described as family heroes and as people who had provided strong personal examples. But higher percentages of men than women were killed in the Purge, and those men who survived faced greater obstacles and died younger. In this study, the women took on the role of *messenger* of family values, traditions, and memories.

Another finding had to do with the significant tendency of the grandchild generation to move in the direction of higher functioning, as evidenced by a decrease in Party membership and an increase in active protest. This shift may have been associated with societal changes in relation to the Party that were taking place when our subjects were young adults. Nevertheless,

Table 4. Regression Analysis Predicting Social Functioning

Variable	R^2	F -Ratio for R^2	Significance of F
Research effort	.19	10.88	.0018

the pressure to conform by joining the Party continued to exist, yet more grandchildren of Purge victims chose not to join than in their parents' generation.

A final observation has to do with the conflict within families with regard to the Communist system. Not surprisingly, most victims who survived the Purge became disaffected with the Communist Party because of their personal experience. The middle generation, however, often developed intense ambivalence about the Party. The Party had destroyed the lives of their parents, but their own membership in the Party could also be a means for survival, for keeping the family safe, and even for gaining some privileges in a period of disastrous societal disorder. If they protested against the Purge too strongly or openly disagreed with Party policies, they themselves could become the victims of later purges.

Interestingly, the children of these middle-generation Party members did not try to hold onto their parents' privileges. In fact, higher social functioning in the third generation was correlated with active protest in the middle generation. The grandchildren whose parents were Party members often disassociated themselves from the values of their parents and, jumping back a generation, felt a stronger emotional and spiritual bond to their victimized grandparents.

CONCLUSION

The study was undertaken in order to gain some understanding of the multigenerational impact of widespread catastrophic loss of significant family members during a period of societal trauma. Russia was selected as the society in which to study the long-term impact of this kind of loss because the events of the Purge—including execution, murder, torture, exile, and separation of millions of family members—took place there during a discrete period of time (1937–1939) that can be specifically identified by succeeding generations. In addition, Russian society has now evolved politically to the point that many catastrophic episodes in the past are being rediscovered and explored. Archives are opening up, and memoirs of the period are flooding the literary marketplace. Organizations such as Memorial are being established that bring together survivors and the families of those who were killed in the Purge in a new spirit of respect, fact gathering, and attempts to understand what happened.

The investigators hypothesized that families who were unable to maintain some sense of connection and continuity with their lost grandparents would experience a negative impact on functioning in succeeding generations; that is, those who were cut off emotionally as well as physically from their grandparents would experience a decline in functioning. The study confirmed this hypothesis. It showed that the way families dealt with the trauma at the time of its occurrence profoundly affected later family functioning. Those who kept a sense of connection with lost family members fared better than those who intentionally or unintentionally let those family members slip into oblivion. Whether the grandparents actually physically survived the Purge was less important than the strength and values passed on to their grandchildren through the knowledge of what had happened to them. Connected grandchildren had a sense of identity firmly rooted in family experience, and many of them continued to enhance

their connections through family research into the past. Disconnected grandchildren were less clear about who they were or where they were going as they attempted to function in the Russia of the 1990s.

FUTURE RESEARCH

This was a relatively small pilot study with a stratified random sample, and therefore, the findings cannot be fully generalized to the wider population of Russia. Nevertheless, the findings indicate potentially significant directions for future research. The concept of cutoff as an aspect of multigenerational process and extended family relationships may prove useful in describing and defining family and societal response to mass trauma, not only in larger samples of the Russian population but also in other societies that have experienced extensive losses of significant family members in past generations. Solid, replicated findings could also have value in predicting the basic functioning of future generations in other traumatized societies. In addition, knowledge about the impact of cutoff on the functioning of succeeding generations may lead to the development of clinical interventions with currently at-risk populations, such as persons in refugee camps.

The phenomenon of cutoff at the societal level is also deserving of future research. When deeply hidden secrets and the shames of the past, as well as access to knowledge and understanding of historical events, are "cut off" from succeeding generations, there may indeed be significant impact on societal functioning, on the ability of that society to care for its members, to generate effective leadership, and to keep a principled course in wider international political and environmental arenas.

Conversely, as cutoff is bridged, as societies uncover, understand, accept, and learn from past catastrophe, they may strengthen themselves for future adversity. As the new Russian government permits an opening up of its archives and an examination of the traumas of the past, the society itself may begin to heal from the atrocities of the Stalin period.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Research for this study was supported by a grant from the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), with funds provided by the U.S. Department of State (Title VIII). Neither of these organizations is responsible for the views expressed in this chapter.

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APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERVIEWS WITH RUSSIAN SUBJECTS, FALL–WINTER, 1993–1994

A. DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Please give the birth year of the following people:
 - (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
2. What is your gender? _____
3. What is your family religion? _____
 - (a) Yours _____
 - (b) Your parents' _____
 - (c) Your maternal grandparents' _____
 - (d) Your paternal grandparents' _____
4. What is the level of education completed by the following members of your family? (*Primary, secondary, university*)
 - (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____

- (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
5. What is/was the main occupation of the following people? (*Create categories*)
- (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
6. How is the current health of the following people? (*Choose from the following: excellent = 5, good = 4, fair = 3, poor = 2, very poor = 1, deceased = 0*)
- (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
7. If any of the following people have died, what was the year and cause of their death? (*List cause*)
- (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
8. What chronic physical symptoms do the following people have or did they have before they died? (*List any and all physical symptoms, for example: heart disease, high blood pressure, intestinal upset, ulcer, migraines, diabetes, arthritis, cancer, etc. Indicate how much this disrupts/disrupted daily living: 5 = very little; 1 = a lot*)
- (a) You _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
9. What psychological or emotional symptoms do these people have or did they have before they died? (*List symptoms such as anxiety, depression, difficult personality, irritability, rages, alcoholism, etc. Indicate how much this disrupts/disrupted daily living and close relationships: 5 = very little, 1 = a lot*)
- (a) You _____

- (b) Your mother _____
- (c) Your father _____
- (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
- (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
- (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
10. How many pregnancies have the following people had?
- (a) Yourself (if female) _____
- (b) Your wife from this marriage (if male) _____
- (c) Your mother _____
- (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (e) Your paternal grandmother _____
11. How many live births resulted from those pregnancies? *List the number of living children each of these people has*
- (a) Yourself (if female) _____
- (b) Your wife from this marriage (if male) _____
- (c) Your mother _____
- (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (e) Your paternal grandmother _____
12. How many of each of these people's children did not survive early childhood?
- (a) Yourself (if female) _____
- (b) Your wife from this marriage (if male) _____
- (c) Your mother _____
- (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (e) Your paternal grandmother _____
13. What is the birth position in the family for the following: *(List oldest, middle, youngest, only child, or twin)*
- (a) Yourself _____
- (b) Your mother _____
- (c) Your father _____
- (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
- (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
- (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
14. The number of times that home was moved during childhood (up to age 17) for the following people:
- (a) Yourself _____
- (b) Your mother _____
- (c) Your father _____
- (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
- (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
- (g) Your paternal grandfather _____

15. The number of times that home (or apartment) was moved during adult life (after age 17) for the following people:
- (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
16. Did you ever live with a grandparent whose husband/wife was a victim of the purges? (*Circle one*) YES NO
- How about on the other side of the family? YES NO
17. If YES, for how many years? _____
- On the other side of the family _____
18. How many marriages have the following people had?
- (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
19. How many divorces have the following people had?
- (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
20. How many times have the following people been widowed?
- (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
21. Do you know anything about the life of your family in generations before your grandparents? (*Circle one*) YES SOME NO
22. If you answered "yes" or "some" to the preceding question, what do you know about your family roots? (Open-ended)

23. How would you describe the general standard of living of your family?

A. Standard of living (*indicate the following range using numbers: 1 = very poor, hard life; 5 = rich, high status*)

- (a) Yourself _____
- (b) Your parents _____
- (c) Your maternal grandparents _____
- (d) Your paternal grandparents _____

B. Did anyone in your family receive any special privileges? (*Such as property, positions, trips abroad, special government apartment or car, country house, etc.*)

- (a) Yourself _____
- (b) Your parents _____
- (c) Your maternal grandparents _____
- (d) Your paternal grandparents _____

If so, please describe:

B. EVENTS AT THE END OF THE 1930s

24. Did your parents/grandparents directly experience repression at the end of the 1930s in the USSR? (*Circle one*) YES NO

25. Which family members were affected by which types of repression and for how many years?

A. Who? (*Write "yes" by all affected family members*)

- (a) Your mother _____
- (b) Your father _____
- (c) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (d) Your maternal grandfather _____
- (e) Your paternal grandmother _____
- (f) Your paternal grandfather _____

B. What happened? (*Indicate arrested, imprisoned, sent to a death squad, sent to a concentration camp, tortured/shot*)

- (a) Your mother _____
- (b) Your father _____
- (c) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (d) Your maternal grandfather _____
- (e) Your paternal grandmother _____
- (f) Your paternal grandfather _____

C. Did he/she return to the family (through amnesty or for other reasons)? (*Write "yes" or "no"*)

- (a) Your mother _____
- (b) Your father _____
- (c) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (d) Your maternal grandfather _____
- (e) Your paternal grandmother _____
- (f) Your paternal grandfather _____

- D. If he/she returned to the family, how many years had gone by?
- (a) Your mother _____
 - (b) Your father _____
 - (c) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (e) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandfather _____
26. Do you know why they were victims of repression? (*Describe in a few sentences*)
27. When did you first learn that repression had occurred in your family? (*Check one*)
- (a) As a young child
 - (b) As an adolescent
 - (c) As an adult
28. Who told you what had happened? (*Check one*)
- (a) The actual victim of repression
 - (b) The husband or wife of the victim, or your parents
 - (c) Other family members
 - (d) Nonfamily members
29. How did the victim's spouse continue to function after the victim was taken away? (*Choose the answer which most nearly reflects the functioning of the victim's spouse. Circle the answer if the respondent knows, write a "?" if he is unsure, and leave blank if he doesn't know.*)
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Continued with previous work | b. Changed work |
| a. Remained healthy | b. Developed health problems |
| a. Stayed in same home | b. Moved |
| a. Stayed with other family members | b. Left them |
| a. Lived openly | b. Hid from the authorities |
| a. Remained married to the victim | b. Divorced the victim |
- Other examples of spouse functioning (list)
30. How did the victim's children continue to function after the victim was taken away? (*Choose the answer which most nearly reflects the functioning of the victim's children. Circle the answer if the respondent knows, write a "?" if he is unsure, and leave blank if he doesn't know*)
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. Continued with education/work | b. Education/work interrupted |
| a. Remained healthy | b. Developed health problems |
| a. Stayed in same home | b. Moved |
| a. Stayed with other family members | b. Left them |
| a. Lived openly | b. Hid from the authorities |
- Other examples of children's functioning (list)

31. In the years right after the repressions of the late 1930s how did the spouse relate to the victim? (*Check the answer which is closest to the spouse's behavior in relation to the victim*)
- (a) Spoke of him/her regularly with pride and love, maintained a belief in the victim's innocence, tried to obtain justice for the victim, told stories about him/her, kept his/her pictures, informed younger family members of what had happened, sent him/her letters and packages, idealized him/her
 - (b) Did not speak of him/her, but maintained a belief in his/ her innocence, worked to obtain justice, did not keep pictures, but sent letters
 - (c) Did not speak of him/her at all or attempt to send anything
 - (d) Spoke negatively of him/her
 - (e) I don't know
32. In the years right after the repressions of the late 1930s how did the victim's children relate to the victim? (*Check the answer which is closest to the children's behavior in relation to the victim.*)
- (a) Spoke of him/her regularly with pride and love, learned stories about him/her, kept his/her pictures, wanted to learn all the details of what had happened, sent him/her letters and packages, idealized him/her
 - (b) Did not speak of him/her, no pictures, but sent letters
 - (c) Did not speak of him/her at all or attempt to send anything
 - (d) Spoke negatively of him/her
 - (e) I don't know
33. What kinds of family stories or myths developed over the years about the family members who were repressed in the late 1930s?
- (a) Idealized heroes, with visible pictures and memorabilia
 - (b) Talked about them as normal family members with struggles and weaknesses
 - (c) Reviled them
 - (d) Never mentioned them, no pictures or memorabilia
 - (e) Other (please describe)
34. When did private family conversations about these lost family members begin? (*Check the decade.*)
- ___ 1930s
 - ___ 1940s
 - ___ 1950s
 - ___ 1960s
 - ___ 1970s
 - ___ 1980s
 - ___ 1990
 - ___ Never
35. Did your parents mention the lost family members as positive or negative examples for you?
- (a) Positive
 - (b) Negative
 - (c) Did not mention them as examples
 - (d) Did not mention them at all
36. Did your grandparents have any special talents or interests which you have continued? (*Circle one*) YES NO I DON'T KNOW

- 37. Do you personally have any photographs, mementos, or objects made by the family members who were repressed in the late 1930s? (*Circle one*) YES NO
- 38. Have children or grandchildren been named after the family members who were victims of the repressions of the late 1930s? (*Circle one*) YES NO
- 39. Does anyone in your generation look like the family members who were repressed in the late 1930s? (*Circle one*) YES NO
- 40. Did you lose any relatives in World War II? (*Circle one*) YES/NO
I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT IT I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT
- 41. If you answer "yes" to question 40,
 - A. How many relatives died? _____
 - B. Which relatives did you lose? (List)
 - (a) From your grandparents' generation _____
 - (b) From your parents' generation _____
- 42. How did your family keep alive the memory of those relatives who were killed in the War?
 - (a) Spoke of them regularly with pride and love, kept their photographs, told the younger members of the family about them
 - (b) Did not speak of them frequently, but kept their photographs
 - (c) I know practically nothing about them

C. COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERSHIP

- 43. Were any of the following people ever Communist Party Members?
 - (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
- 44. If you answered "yes" to question 43, were any of the following people paid functionaries of the Communist Party? (*Please list the years of Party employment*)
 - (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____
 - (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
 - (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
 - (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
 - (g) Your paternal grandfather _____
- 45. Were any of the following people ever subjected to persecution or government-imposed restrictions in the post-war period? (*Indicate the intensity of persecution: arrest = 5, expulsion from job, apartment = 4, denied promotion = 3, having your abilities ignored = 2, moral pressure = 1*)
 - (a) Yourself _____
 - (b) Your mother _____
 - (c) Your father _____

- (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
- (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
- (g) Your paternal grandfather _____

46. Did any of your family members do anything in the postwar period for which the government might have persecuted them? (*Indicate the possibility of the following dangers: arrest = 5, expulsion from job, apartment, etc. = 4, denied promotion = 3, having your abilities ignored = 2, moral pressure = 1*)

- (a) Yourself _____
- (b) Your mother _____
- (c) Your father _____
- (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
- (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
- (g) Your paternal grandfather _____

47. If any member of your family did something for which the government persecuted them or might have persecuted them, what do you think were their motives? (*Use the following scale: accidental or impulsive decision = 1, went along with friends = 2, disagreed with restrictions on personal rights = 3, struggled for personal rights = 4, fought against the system = 5*)

- (a) Yourself _____
- (b) Your mother _____
- (c) Your father _____
- (d) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (e) Your maternal grandfather _____
- (f) Your paternal grandmother _____
- (g) Your paternal grandfather _____

D. LIFE IN THE PRESENT TIME

48. Who currently lives in your household?

A. (Check all that apply)

- (a) You live alone _____
- (b) Marital or other adult partner _____
- (c) Your children (give number) _____
- (d) Your siblings (give number) _____
- (e) Your mother _____
- (f) Your father _____
- (g) Your maternal grandmother _____
- (h) Your maternal grandfather _____
- (i) Your paternal grandmother _____
- (j) Your paternal grandfather _____
- (k) Other (specify) _____

B. Give the total number of people living in your household _____

49. How does your present adult household (those living with you) function in present-day Russia? (*List excellent = 5, good = 4, fair = 3, badly = 2, very badly = 1*)

- (a) Financial stability _____
- (b) Survival issues (food ____, shelter ____, clothing ____)

- (c) Health of adults _____
- (d) Health of children _____
- (e) Adult attitude toward education _____
- (f) How are the children doing in school? _____
- (g) Satisfaction with professional work _____
- (h) General satisfaction with life _____
- (i) Attitude toward the future _____
50. How would you describe the following relationships in your present adult life?
- (a) With your parents _____
- (b) With your spouse _____
- (c) With your children _____
- (d) With your grandparents _____
- (Choose one of the following in characterizing your relationships)*
- (a) Very close and dependent, can't get along without each other
- (b) Friendly-close
- (c) Conflicted-close
- (d) Friendly-distant
- (e) Conflicted-distant
- (f) Cut off, no contact
51. Have you maintained religious traditions in your adult household which come from one of the following families? (Write YES SOMEWHAT NO)
- (a) Your parents _____
- (b) Your maternal grandparents _____
- (c) Your paternal grandparents _____
52. If you answered "yes" or "somewhat" to the previous question, what form do religious traditions take in your household? *(Circle all that apply)*
- (a) We have religious objects at home
- (b) We celebrate religious holidays
- (c) We attend church
53. Have you had a new baby since August 1991 or do you plan additional children? *(Answer YES or NO to the following)*
- (a) New baby _____
- (b) Planning additional children _____
54. What is your reaction to the new processes in Russia since August 1991? *(Circle one)*
- (a) Wholeheartedly welcome the changes
- (b) Basically support the changes, although with some reservations
- (c) Indifferent
- (d) Don't support the changes
- (e) Strongly oppose the changes
- My opinion fluctuates
55. What is your children's reaction to the new processes in Russia today? *(Open-ended response.)*
56. Have you been involved in the new processes in Russia since August 1991? *(Circle YES or NO)*
- (a) YES NO Voting

- (b) YES NO Reading newspapers
 - (c) YES NO Participation in demonstrations/on the barricades
 - (d) YES NO Personal connections with Western cultures
 - (e) YES NO Travel abroad
 - (f) YES NO Membership in a new political party
 - (g) YES NO Directly involved in political process as a leader
 - (h) YES NO Involved in social initiatives
 - (i) YES NO Organized/involved in business initiatives
 - (j) YES NO Passive disinterest
 - (k) YES NO Actively opposed
- Other?

57. Do you think there are any connections between the events your family experienced in the period of repression at the end of the 1930s and the way your life developed for you? (*Open-ended response*)

58. Have you been actively involved in collecting information about your family members who were victims of repression? (Investigation, reading documents, collecting historical information, etc.) (*Open-ended response*)