Introduction

Testimonial Literacy

We are transitioning into an era in which survivors of the Holocaust will no longer be alive, leaving behind only documented traces of their testimonies. To preserve the individual and historical textures of those experiences, it is imperative to cultivate infrastructures for and approaches to testimonies that train our sensitivity to their lived, physical origins as well as to the institutional practices that shaped them. Fundamental to inheriting Holocaust survivor memories is the recognition that the faces, bodies, and voices of testimonial subjects not only provide necessary interpersonal and ethical underpinnings for attending to the suffering of others, but that they also work in conversation with an array of archival infrastructures. Testimonies emerge from an individually and institutionally embedded practice framed by a diverse range of aims that cannot be reduced to their empirical historical content or visceral impact. In that sense, post-Holocaust generations receive testimonies not as enclosed capsules of memory but as constantly mediated, contested, and fragile acts of remembering. Not only are testimonies molded by institutional and technical interventions at the moment of their recording, but they are also shaped as they migrate across various media platforms and as archivists develop new forms of digital preservation.

Examining Holocaust testimonies involves looking at these infrastructures and the labor of the interview process, extending to moments that never make it to the video screen. Analysis presents the challenge of addressing the media specificities of testimonies—of examining them not as raw sources but as processes mediated by the encounter between witnesses and the interviewers and technologies employed by an archive. Those include the roles of institutional protocols, those that are not always apparent on screen (e.g., pre-interview questioning, internal ratings of testimonies, and staff debates about the usability of testimony), that impact the production and reception of testimony. On-screen

issues ranging from the depth and nature of interview questions, the lighting setup, and the placement of interviewees within the camera frame also influence how testimony is delivered at the moment of production and transmitted to future generations. Furthermore, some moments in testimonies emphasize how witnesses express themselves through tone of voice, physical gestures, and frequent silences. The meanings generated from those expressions emerge through careful listening and viewing by audiences, and hence an examination of testimonies is inexorably linked to a consideration of the debates and choices that shape how testimony is delivered and filtered.

The proliferation of archives that collect and disseminate testimonies of the Holocaust has been matched by diverse and expansive efforts to teach, research, and theorize about those sources. *Reframing Holocaust Testimony* illuminates those practices and discourses by examining audiovisual testimonies of the Holocaust with the aim of cultivating what I term *testimonial literacy,* or an eye and ear for sensing the layers, ruptures, and tensions that mark the processes of giving and receiving accounts of the Shoah. That literacy also entails an awareness of the messier, more unplanned moments that emerge throughout the testimony process but do not necessarily make their way into exhibited or officially transcribed testimonies. These include exchanges caught between takes, as the camera continues to roll but the interviewer is unaware of that fact. And it extends to the sighs and screams that are withheld from the transcript for fear of suggesting emotion at the expense of sobriety.

Such moments that capture a sense of the mutual labor involved in testimony are often consigned to the periphery rather than the center of the archival process. And in relegating them to the margins, archives often obscure the preferences and approaches that interviewers and archivists bring to the work of testimony. However, video testimonies can also exceed the intentions and methodologies of their respective archives. Analytical approaches developed within film and media studies are central to this book as they help to draw attention to the fleeting, ephemeral, seemingly marginal elements that flicker across media screens or are left on the cutting-room floor, but that nonetheless represent unexpected and essential traces of meaning. It is crucial to first become familiar with the various architectures and media forms of remembrance that shape interviews before analyzing the extent to which video testimonies can transcend their framing and leave behind illuminating fragments.

Reframing Holocaust Testimony moves beyond an exploration of the relationship between interviewers and interviewees in order to develop a systematic and comprehensive approach to locating the institutional voices of Holocaust testimonies.[1] Whether in the case of the Fortunoff Archive, the Holocaust Museum, or the Shoah Foundation, an archive's interview methods are never neu-

tral; rather, they are embedded in particular sets of institutional histories and methodologies. In calling attention to those mediating factors, Geoffrey Hartman has noted the following: "While the video testimonies have an unusually direct emotional impact, they are mediated by frame conditions."[2] Hartman includes in this category having survivors speak in languages other than their mother tongue and being interviewed at a time and place that is far removed from the historical events.[3] This book expands upon Hartman's concept of frame conditions to analyze how testimonies are created by the particular institutional cultures and media practices of the three archives under examination, working in conversation and often in conflict with individual witnesses.[4]

Marianne Hirsch has eloquently reflected on the ways that the Holocaust is becoming "multiply mediated."[5] Her examination of the ethical and empathetic dimensions of confronting and teaching the Holocaust in the "face of extremity" conceives of future generations as inheritors of Holocaust memory.[6] By proposing the term *postmemory* to describe the movement away from a living connection to the Holocaust, Hirsch describes how subsequent generations who engage images of the Shoah can be "fully cognizant of the mediated and media-driven source of representation that shapes both knowledge and meaning of the Holocaust."[7] As she contends, the emergence of postmemory has the potential to facilitate a process of "retrospective witnessing by adoption" or "adopting the traumatic experiences—and thus also the memories of others—as experiences one might oneself have had."[8] Rather than constituting an act of appropriation, Hirsch contends that "on the contrary, compulsive and traumatic repetition connects the second generation to the first, producing rather than screening out the effect of trauma that was lived so much more directly as compulsive repetition by survivors and contemporary witnesses."[9]

The concept of postmemory has potentially strong purchase in regards to audiovisual testimonies, even though it was originally developed in response to photographs and other still images of the Holocaust. More specifically, the "embodied knowledge" that is being transferred to postmemory generations is increasingly manifest in the form of video testimonies across a multitude of venues including museums, archives, and online communities.[10] Certain formative scholarship on audiovisual Holocaust testimonies has not comprehensively addressed those multiple mediations, including issues of institutional and archival practices.[11] That influential body of work often emphasizes the one-to-one transferential dynamic between the interviewer and the interviewee, usually at the expense of examining how formal practices and institutional infrastructures shape not only the production of testimony, but also its dissemination and reception across multiple archives and interviews.[12] Nevertheless, there has been a growing group of scholars directing their work toward issues of archival re-

ception and technical mediation, thereby expanding on the established canon of testimony scholarship.[13]

This book falls within that latter group by salvaging the archival voices of testimonies, but is still equally concerned with identifying and preserving the traces of what Michael Renov describes as "embodied memory" within testimony archives, that is, the individual expressions of witnesses that can often work against the more universalizing and instrumentalizing dimensions of interview protocols.[14] The archives featured in this book do not necessarily approach the production and prospective reception of testimonies with the same degree of investment. Certainly it is crucial to acknowledge that each of the three selected sites adopts its own set of expectations concerning how testimonies will be developed, conducted, and accessed. At the same time, this book does not lose sight of the signatures of individual expressions in testimonies. The performances of individual testimonies underscore how witnesses can represent a form of embodied history that cannot be relegated to institutional and depersonalized discourses of knowledge and power.[15] In other words, some poetic expressions of testimonies evade positivistic categorization and segmentation. Yet at the same time, those poetic aspects of testimony are subjected to several mediating factors.[16]

One of the challenges presented by this project has been the task of analyzing the archives in question as potential venues for generating a "counter-cinematic form" that will resist the historical amnesia associated with mass media.[17] As Geoffrey Hartman argues, testimonies can serve that counter-cinematic function as sources for training our eyes and ears to the textures of individual expression rather than as impositions of narrative closure and coherence. As central as it is for archives to create spaces where witnesses freely express themselves and where audiences can be "trained to hear" (as well as see) those testimonies, there is also the challenge of archives drawing attention to other voices that enter into the conversation—including the presence of the interviewer (or interviewers) and the epistemological preferences of institutions.[18] An archive's holdings provide a window into the infrastructures that help frame the lived quality of testimonies, rather than positioning them as part of a "living monument of retrieved voices" uttered by witnesses.[19]

Certain scholars have advocated that archives openly, perhaps even self-reflexively, acknowledge the processes and limits that shape their collection of testimonies.[20] However, in the absence of that deliberate, critically aware turn in institutional authorship, users and critics of more conventional testimony projects can nonetheless listen and watch closely for unintended and revealing ruptures that express the frictions and layers of memory work, thus complicating the imposition of false closure and its accompanying narrative pleasures. Testimonies

can thus embody the notion of "received history," one that "interweaves both events of the Holocaust and the ways they are passed down to us." That concept can be extended to archives, often by reading against the grain of their respective institutional preferences.[21]

The Dynamics of Testimony

The three case studies that constitute the core of this book describe how memorial sites and archives attempt to structure the encounter between witnesses and interviewers, and subsequently that between recorded testimonies and audiences, in ways that have profound analytical, affective, and ethical implications. The institutions being examined give varying degrees of agency to witnesses during the process of collecting their testimonies, and each approach shapes the process of reenacting the past. Therefore, by exploring the architectures of the interview process, this book can shed light on the spaces where both archives and witnesses assert their respective agency. That exploration can honor the individual textures of witnesses' memories, while also calling attention to how archives can be both midwives and obstacles to the creation of testimonial memories.

Given the highly mediated quality of Holocaust testimony, the compelling conceptions of deep and common memory explored by Lawrence Langer, Saul Friedländer, and Charlotte Delbo should be wedded with an analysis of the archival methods that help elicit them. Expanding on Delbo's conceptualization of Holocaust memories, Langer differentiates common memory from deep memory, showing how a witness can move from the chronologically grounded and more removed nature of the former, only to find him- or herself thrown out of sequence by the destabilizing and often anti-redemptive grip of the latter.[22] That has often been evident in my own research as I observe how certain archives and interviewers are invested in developing more easily accessible, often chronologically charted testimonies (that is, common memory), only to meet resistance from subjects who are thrown back into the past, unable to move forward with a particular account as they are immersed in deep memory. In that sense, while testimony archives do not simply capture or record common and deep memory, they do influence how they emerge and take shape. Friedländer has expressed a particular concern that the traces of deep memory will fade from the scene after survivors pass away, leaving in their place a more redemptive, restorative common memory. *Reframing Holocaust Testimony* engages that prospect, examining the possibilities of preserving the recorded traces of survivor's stories and then transmitting them "beyond individual recall," perhaps by maintaining deep memory through particular modes of archival production and testimonial interpretation in lieu of living carriers.[23]

The challenge remains for archivists, scholars, and users of testimonies to avoid reducing witnesses to particular archival expectations. Langer's perspectives on testimony tend to emphasize its anti-redemptive nature, working against cathartic interpersonal exchanges by presenting "frozen moments of anguish."[24] Patricia Yaeger has noted precisely this kind of dynamic, describing moments in testimony that "refute our compassion and constitute zones of experience that may be sympathy-secluded, empathy-unfriendly: that jar the act of compassion."[25] As my analysis of particular testimonies will show, there are moments that personify Yaeger's description of "when something uncontrolled and uncontrollable about the speaking body disrupts careful listening by creating an abrupt change in scale: a moment when body and speech seem to move in opposite directions."[26] These points, Yaeger observes, often arise when the listener wants to receive and open her- or himself to the pain of the other, but is inhibited from doing so by a performed act of estrangement. This estrangement can be ethically charged by forcing us to recognize our inability to fully comprehend traumatic memories.[27]

Reframing Holocaust Testimony calls attention to both the formations and ruptures of intimacy that occur throughout the process of collecting Holocaust testimonies. The work of video testimony can never be reduced to a typed transcript—it is an audiovisual form of historiography that renders history legible in embodied form. It draws from voices, faces, and other expressive elements that work not only in concert, but also in conflict with one another, revealing a more complicated picture of a witness's experiences and how he or she grapples with its aftermath. And yet by focusing exclusively on the fragmenting aspects of the interview process, there is the potential for scholars to miss those moments in interviews that can also be coherent and even affirming expressions on the part of the witnesses. In an attempt to focus attention on the agency of survivors and other witnesses—an effort that is of great importance—there has been a tendency in some scholarship on Holocaust testimonies by those such as Yaeger and Langer to engage the anti-redemptive aspects of testimony at the expense of more fully considering the redemptive elements with which they seem locked in opposition. While an anti-redemptive line of analysis serves as a means of countering the cathartic frameworks preferred by certain archives, it still represents its own form of preferences for how testimony should be practiced and interpreted.

The work of Aleida Assmann, for instance, describes how video testimony represents an integration of history and memory: "It renders accounts of the ways in which the historical event of the Holocaust has deformed and shattered the patterns of an individual life."[28] Yet without an extensive analysis of particular

testimonies, Assmann's claim that testimony "unsettles" the storytelling process and narrative coherence, and ultimately "shatter[s] the biographical frame" of witnesses seems limited.[29] *Reframing Holocaust Testimony* not only highlights individual performances of testimony but also the methods and practices that help shape them, and in so doing discerns some semblance of structure and coherence in the frameworks of testimonies. Never perfectly enacted, testimonies are contingent upon the specific dialogue fostered among interviewees, interviewers, and the institutions the latter represent. In other words, testimony is marked by *both* shattering and unifying impulses, each represented by the tendencies and preferences of the respective testimonial parties. Video testimonies can offer moments of cogent analysis rather than or in addition to bursts of raw emotion. Assmann, like Langer and Yaeger, contends that video testimony blocks attempts to frame traumatic memory in a redemptive way. While that is often the case, there are moments when testimonies, depending on the particular personal and institutional voices that frame them, do in fact suggest some form of closure, if not redemption.

Although Assmann draws our attention to the mediated aspects of video testimonies—that is, to the ways in which they depend on moral and technical support and the guidance of an interlocutor—she focuses on how they are "mediated and refracted through a specific personality," rather than on the influence of institutional and media practices.[30] In her words:

> An archive is not a museum; it is not designed for public access and popular presentations. . . . There is, of course, some order and arrangement in the digital archive, too, but it is one that ensures only the retrieval of information, not an intellectually or emotionally effective display. The archive, in other words, is not a form of presentation but of preservation; it collects and stores information, it does not arrange, exhibit, process, or interpret it.[31]

As I argue, however, the boundaries between archives and their exhibition contexts are much more permeable and subject to intersecting narrative structures. The methods for selecting interviewees, conducting training sessions, and producing interviews are developed alongside considerations of transmission and access. I will show that the "order and arrangement in the digital archive" not only provide access to information; they also attempt to calibrate the intellectual and emotional representation of testimony. The archives that I examine in this book are always engaged on some level with entangled considerations of preservation and transmission, intellectual engagement and affective responses.[32]

Testimony and Popular Representations of the Holocaust

Tracing the development of testimonial archives intersects with histories of Holocaust survivor identity. Several scholars have pointed to 1978 as a critical moment in the emergence of survivors as bearers of expertise, authenticity, and moral authority in Holocaust commemorations in the United States. They often cite President Jimmy Carter's establishment of the President's Commission on the Holocaust, which mandated the creation of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and converged with the airing that year of the popular NBC miniseries *Holocaust,* which reached 120 million viewers.[33]

Annette Wieviorka has traced this development in an international context, historicizing the official (as opposed to individual and communal) invocation of survivor identity back further to the development of Holocaust survivor culture two decades after World War II. She contends that survivors did not form coherent social groups in the public spheres of the United States, Europe, or Israel until the trial of Adolf Eichmann in 1961–1962, an event that allowed the discourse of Holocaust witnessing to take hold at an even deeper, more public level.[34] While Wieviorka's historical scope is limited and does not account for the development of survivor identities and Holocaust commemorations both during and immediately after the war, she rightly underscores the trial's momentous pedagogical impact: "For the first time, a trial explicitly set out to provide a lesson in history. For the first time, the Holocaust was linked to the themes of pedagogy and transmission . . . but above all, the Eichmann trial marks the advent of the witness."[35] In contrast to the Nuremberg trials, the Eichmann case was based heavily on both written documents and oral evidence from victims—with the testimonies providing a living immediacy and embodied charge that could not be captured in documents. This living valence is what, in Wieviorka's view, represents the potential of Holocaust testimony: the "immediacy of these first-person accounts burns through the 'cold storage of history.'"[36]

That sense of immediacy is, however, always framed, not only at the interpersonal level, but also in terms of archival and institutional practices. Scholars who address the institutional cultures of Holocaust testimony archives have often reinforced hierarchical distinctions between high and low (or popular) forms of representation. For example, Wieviorka compares the development of the Fortunoff Archive at Yale in 1978, following the NBC *Holocaust* miniseries, with that of the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, established in 1994 by Steven Spielberg after the release of his critically acclaimed film *Schindler's List* (1993). More specifically, she found the influence of Spielberg's film on the development of the Shoah Foundation particularly distressing in that she

asserts that the foundation, in contrast to the Fortunoff Archive, privileges redemptive and accessible narratives over anti-redemptive, impenetrable accounts. She states: "Whereas the founders of the Yale archive insisted on focusing on the survivor's sense of having lived on 'another planet' . . . the Spielberg project is based, to the contrary, on the desire to show 'ordinary people,' people who have returned to 'normal.'"[37]

This position reflects a certain strain of scholarly commentary on the intersections between audiovisual Holocaust testimony and popular culture, one that reinforces distinctions between more rarefied and more widely accessible collections. It also speaks to a broader scholarly aversion to the Americanization of the Holocaust. Wieviorka and others have expressed concern about loss of the specificity of survivor experience and do not adequately acknowledge the social and pedagogical potential of testimonies circulating across broader venues. As the argument goes, the popularization of survivor identity through film and television, while leading to the increased presence of the Holocaust in American life, has not increased knowledge of the events, but rather imbues the historical experiences with simplified lessons of redemption, hope, and tolerance.[38] Yet while there is reason for concern regarding the potential for homogenizing Holocaust memory, this book demonstrates that even some of the most institutionally centralized and popularized sites of Holocaust testimony do not present a monolithic embodiment of Holocaust representation.[39]

Debates on the popularization of Holocaust remembrance reveal a strong current of anxiety regarding the relativization of events through media saturation. Geoffrey Hartman has expressed some skepticism about the proliferation of Holocaust representations, remarking: "Our sense of what is real is mediated by the media, by electronic phantoms that extend the confusion of reality and propaganda, or place events on the same level."[40] For Hartman the implications of that leveling effect are profound in terms of how future generations are bound—absent first-person encounters—to receive historical memory in mediated forms. He recognizes that educators will play an increasingly crucial role in "replacing eyewitness transmission" of historical events, but he urges them to guard against what he terms "anti-memory"—or the trivialization of the Holocaust and the fostering of forgetfulness through sentimentality.[41] However, we cannot ignore the vast wealth of audiovisual testimonies already housed in archives, even if some of them have adopted strategies that scholars such as Hartman consider problematic. This book demonstrates that it is possible and essential to engage these testimonies—whether in more popular or rarefied archives—in ways that call attention to their complexities, including those not intended by these sites.

History, Memory, and the Performance of Testimony

The contours of the debates concerning the mediation of Holocaust testimony are additionally shaped by deep frictions between contested notions of history and memory, performativity and authenticity, and cognition and affect. The film and media scholar Janet Walker has convincingly argued that in order to begin grappling with those tensions, it is critical to engage closely with both the rhetorical and performed aspects of Holocaust testimonies. In doing so, it is possible to move away from a conception of traumatic memory that asserts that either a trauma occurred and its subsequent recollections are true, or that it did not occur and the recollections are false.[42] We can thus maintain an investment in historical truth without jettisoning matters of subjectivity or imposing false notions of closure on events. With that in mind, Walker makes a powerful case that it is imperative to adopt a position that extends beyond the limiting binary of "literalist" versus "social constructivist" approaches.[43] In a similar vein, Allesandro Portelli refers to the "dialogic discourse" at the heart of oral (and video) testimony—a position that does not compartmentalize historical "fidelity" from "subjectivity" but rather addresses their necessarily intertwined relationship.[44]

This more inclusive position would develop strategies to "triangulate" memories—to examine testimonies, for instance, alongside other sources such as historical commentary and original documents.[45] The scholarship of Holocaust historian Christopher Browning reflects such an approach. He provides an incisive critique of the manner in which historians of the Holocaust have traditionally been averse to integrating postwar testimony into their work, preferring instead to deal with documents contemporaneous to the events. Browning acknowledges some of the limitations to using testimonies as historical evidence, but nonetheless presents a powerful argument that they can be used in a rigorous and responsible fashion, particularly considering that the lack of archival evidence for many aspects of Holocaust history demands careful examination of testimonies in their stead. In order to be used effectively, however, he argues that testimonies cannot be interpreted as homogenous expressions of collective experience, but rather must be seen as more fragmented collections of frequently conflicting personal accounts. It is in that regard that Browning's work has substantially informed my own, in particular his examination of the ways in which personal accounts often complicate institutional attempts to unify memories of the Holocaust. As he suggests, the relegation of testimonies to their *collective* (as opposed to *collected*) status is not only ethically problematic, but also counter-historical. Browning powerfully demonstrates that historians can approach Holocaust testimonies as more than discourses of uniqueness or universalism.

Browning's important methodological contributions have thus advanced discussion of how scholars can incorporate an understanding of interview and archival practices into their use of testimonies.[46] To be sure, testimonies need to be vetted and cross-checked with the same kind of care used for more conventional sources. Nonetheless, video testimonies are mediated and performed in unique ways, and can be revealing even when they are not completely accurate in terms of historical content; they can still shed light on the ways in which witnesses perceive themselves and labor through their stories. Thus, audiovisual testimonies should be analyzed carefully, both in terms of their narrative and performative elements, but also for their evidentiary functions. In the case of video testimonies, archives often attempt to mitigate and even efface what they perceive as the tensions that mark the intersection between historical investigation and the subjective, experiential aspects of testimony. In that sense, I engage Dori Laub's powerful contention that the listener to trauma is a "party to the creation of knowledge *de novo*" and "a guide and an explorer" in the testimony process.[47] However, the creation of knowledge and the map that helps navigate the paths of memory do not only involve the dyadic relationship between the survivor and those who bear witness to the process of witnessing. They are also part of a broader constellation of technical, archival, and epistemological frameworks as well as a diverse range of audiences and users. While Browning has played a pivotal role in demonstrating the historical usefulness of testimonies, it remains for scholars of the Holocaust to examine the archival and media specificities of those sources. Those specificities not only impact their accessibility, but also shape them as texts of history and memory.

A Mosaic of Testimonies

In writing this book, my first—and most daunting—task was to develop an approach for choosing which testimonies to analyze. The sheer number of testimonies compiled by the three archives was itself overwhelming, constituting a vast mosaic of testimonies that together exceeded 60,000 interviews. Any select sample of those testimonies necessarily excludes most of the individual witnesses recorded by these archives. Therefore, in the same way that the Fortunoff Archive, Holocaust Museum, and Shoah Foundation had to devise their own approaches for collecting and transmitting testimonies, I too had to create a methodology for choosing and then analyzing those archives' collections.

With that in mind, I developed three separate yet often intersecting categories of witnesses—a designation I will interchange with the terms *survivor, subject, witness,* and *interviewee.* Most of the individuals whose testimonies I examine fall under the category of Jewish survivorship, thus delineating the parameters of this study. While the Holocaust was experienced in different ways

by individuals who embodied a diverse range of religious, ethnic, racial, sexual, political, and other identities, most of the witnesses who are recorded and prominently featured by the three archives in question are Jewish survivors. Although such terms as *witness, survivor,* and *interviewee* all have limitations and biases, particularly in obscuring the collaborative aspects of testimony, they still reveal how these archives position those whom they record.[48]

I divided my sample of survivors into three categories. The largest group comprises witnesses who gave testimony at each of the three archives. Chapter 4 is reserved for these "comparative" witnesses. The other samples include survivors whose testimonies frequently circulate within and beyond the archives for exhibition or pedagogical purposes and witnesses who are deemed by archives to be exemplary in terms of projecting or embodying the particular preferences of their respective archive or memorial sites.[49] These classifications are not necessarily exclusive of one another in that some witnesses fall under more than one category. For example, certain exemplary subjects are more likely to have their testimonies placed into circulation or may be more inclined to give testimonies on several occasions and at more than one archive. Nevertheless, these three categories allow me to better isolate how each institution attempts to project its preferences on the process of creating testimonies, elucidating what archives perceive as compelling Holocaust stories.

The most difficult yet crucial category that I had to locate and research comprises "comparative" witnesses: those subjects who gave testimony at each of the three sites. Cross-referencing catalogues of interviewees in each of the three archives, I was able to generate a sample of at least fourteen of these subjects.[50] Their interviews do not fully represent the multivocal quality of testimony archives. Because only a relative handful of witnesses recorded interviews with all three archives, they are exceptional cases. Nonetheless, they represent an invaluable trove of testimonies, allowing me to compare and contrast across each of the three sites how witnesses are positioned, and in turn position themselves in the context of different institutional practices across different time periods.

Testimonies that circulate within and beyond the institutional confines of archives and museums, including such forms as documentary films, museum exhibitions, and pedagogical programming, can be called exemplary in that they represent or embody an archive's idealized, selective vision of its approach to recording testimony. Because not every exemplary testimony is put into circulation, my second category of testimonies draws only from interviews that were edited for wider distribution within new formats. Exemplary witnesses are designated as such through internal assessment and ratings protocols, while the circulating witnesses are subject to further curatorial processes that determine

which subjects to highlight, and in turn, which segments of their stories to feature in distributed materials.

A number of considerations determined my third group of exemplary witnesses. Each of the three archives developed its own institutional methodology—some more formal and standardized than others—for rating or otherwise assessing the testimonies in its collection. These institutional criteria ranged from dramatic effectiveness, narrative coherence, or psychological complexity, to a witness's ability to balance the emotive or cognitive demands of testimony or to his or her inclination to glean lessons from an experience. In other instances, archives identified exemplary subjects not only by the quality of their videotaped testimonies, but also by how well they delivered their accounts in person to live audiences. In some other cases, an archive designated a testimony as aberrational among its holdings. However, it is vital to underscore that while archives may characterize these testimonies as "exemplary," those descriptions speak more to the preferences of archives rather than to the ways witnesses often deliver their testimonies against the grain. Not only do "exemplary" survivors often challenge the instrumentalization of their testimonies, but there are also the interviews of more "ordinary" witnesses—explored in this book—who often fall through the cracks of archives.

Frames of Interpretation

In order to pinpoint some of the processes fundamental to the production and dissemination of testimonies, I have categorized the interviews in each archive and each of my three group types according to various frames of interpretation. Those include, among other things: the methods interviewers use to engage witnesses in discussions on how they became aware of the events they describe on tape; the kinds of narrative outlines the archive uses to attempt to structure testimonies, often into coherent, sequential units; and the degree to which subjects are given adequate space in which to assert their own agency in delivering their stories. Those preferences shape, in conversation and often in conflict with interviewees, the conditions of possibility for giving and receiving testimonies, rather than providing the final say. And they cannot account for the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and identities—including those of gender (among other considerations)—that impact witnesses' experiences throughout their lives, including those of giving testimony.[51]

My first interpretative framework covers the labor of testimony, by which I mean those moments in interviews that capture a witness's physical gestures, vocal expressions, reenactments, and general performance of memory, both in dialogue with the interviewer and framed through the modes of production. These moments include instances when witnesses struggle with translating deeply in-

terior reflections into terms that might be externally legible through linguistic, physical, and other forms of expression. This process represents a form of reenactment in which the aural, physical, and visual performances of memory, which are themselves products of (interior) mediation in their own right, encounter the archive's external mediating demands.

I also analyze the interplay of common and deep memory. In the process of collecting testimonies, the demands of interviewers and the archive can attempt to shape how witnesses negotiate the terrain of their remembering, often imposing coherent narrative sequences only to see them uprooted by an interviewee's immersion in the past. Interviews often reflect an archive's effort to enact the more unified and narratively coherent experiences of common memory at the expense of exploring the shards of deep memory. Other testimonies reveal an attempt by interviewers to extract that deep memory without first attending to the narrative devices that would allow it to emerge. In other words, deep memory and common memory are entangled—and exist in dialogue—with one another, and thus they require careful attention from those bearing witness. It is often when interviewers attempt to sequester common memory from deep memory that the frictions between institutional itineraries and individual memories come to light.

Another frame of interpretation includes what I refer to as the "off-camera dimensions of testimony." Those are moments that seem to reside near the periphery of video interviews; they often arise between tape changes or after the official testimony has concluded and informal discussion continues in the mistaken belief that the camera is turned off. In typed transcripts these moments often appear to be absent or are otherwise isolated at the margins. In examining these suppressed and often jarring moments in testimony—which underscore what an archive attempts to leave out—one can gain a stronger sense of an institution's investments in mediating acts of remembering. It is often in those margins that witnesses assert agency in their testimony and at times even confront the interviewer on issues of the authoring of their interview.

Finally, I examine the ways in which interviewers and witnesses attempt to assert their respective conceptions of individual and collective memory, official history and personal experience, and the obligation to give voice to absent victims. This includes moments when witnesses imbue testimonies with a sense of immediacy and moral urgency in anticipation of an impending moment when their living presence will no longer be able to inform and authenticate what has been recorded on tape.

My examination of those issues begins with chapter 1 through the case study of the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University. That archive has deep roots in the survivor community and is invested in ful-

filling its obligations to preserve the sanctity of its memories. It currently holds approximately 4,400 video testimonies and continues to conduct recordings with witnesses across the globe. The archive is understandably very protective of its holdings, as demonstrated by its withholding of the last names of witnesses in its catalogue and by maintaining a single, on-site access point at Yale University's library. The library catalogue that includes the Fortunoff Archive holdings is available to those outside of the university community, allowing users to locate interviews from remote locations. However, access to the collections is currently only available in person at the Department of Manuscripts and Archives at Yale's Sterling Library. While ensuring that only the most dedicated and rigorous students, educators, and scholars will travel to Yale in order to access the collections, this restriction has limited the broader circulation of its holdings.

Using testimonies, internal documents, and interviews with staff, my research examines how the Fortunoff Archive both acknowledges and downplays the practices and preferences that guide how it collects and distributes interviews. The archive's approach to issues of media specificity reflects its efforts to expand the availability of testimonies working within an archival model that has until recently privileged on-site library visitation rather than remote and more interactive access. The archive further distinguishes itself from other sites of Holocaust testimony by its open engagement with the self-reflexive aspects of the interview process. For example, in recording sessions, the archive privileges the agency of witnesses over that of interviewers in guiding the narrative. Yet it openly acknowledges that testimony is an act of mutual labor between those who give and receive memory, and that the content and form of that exchange are necessarily intertwined.

When circulating segments of testimony beyond its walls (in edited films and educational materials), however, the archive often leaves out traces of its institutional intervention and focuses almost exclusively on the expressions of witnesses. In addressing a wider audience, it sets out to stabilize the interpretative possibilities of its testimonies by positioning them as raw resources absent any institutional mediation. This reflects its ethical and proprietary preferences, which not only privilege witnesses as the primary authors and agents of their testimonies but also aim to prevent the misappropriation of material. However, by regulating the dissemination of its holdings, whether by editing out the presence of interviewers or by keeping most of its testimonies offline, the archive not only limits its wider access but also prioritizes a mode of reception that can obscure the shared labor and mediations of video testimony.[52]

The second case study, examined in chapter 2, explores the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (or USHMM) in Washington, D.C. While it possesses neither the oldest nor the largest collection of testimonies among the three

sites, it is the most centralized and institutionally expansive, bearing the imprimatur of the U.S. federal government. Furthermore, its capacity not only as an archive, but also as a memorial site, exhibition space, and educational center positions it as an illuminating case for examining testimony across phases of collection and transmission. Rather than presenting a comprehensive history of the development of the Holocaust Museum, this chapter provides a focused examination of how the authority and authenticity of its testimonies are channeled by and through that institution.[53]

A unanimous Act of Congress in 1980 gave the museum its official mandate to serve as an interventionist "living memorial" of the Holocaust that could attend not only to that past genocide but also to the emergence of contemporary atrocities.[54] At the core of the museum's charter is a tripartite mission to commemorate, document, and activate the memory of the Holocaust in the face of current events, with its federal authorization solidifying its political and symbolic currency in pursuit of those aims. Its location on the National Mall adjacent to the museums of the Smithsonian Institution and in close proximity to the Jefferson Memorial and Washington Monument places it squarely in the heart of an official American commemorative landscape.[55]

At the same time, museum planners had to explore ways to import the historical and evidentiary authority from the European topography of the Holocaust. A central strategy for accomplishing that aim was a push to collect audiovisual testimonies that would provide embodied resonance to the museum's exhibitions and programming. Originally intended to house the central national archive of Holocaust testimonies, the museum's oral history department has to date collected more than 9,000 interviews, mostly in English, in both audio and video formats.[56] However, one of the museum's central priorities, and in turn a driving impetus for creating a department of oral history, was a mandate from the main planners that the "soul" of the USHMM would be its Permanent Exhibition and that all other activities, including the collection of testimony, would be secondary to developing that core space.[57] While the representation of victims and survivors is central to that effort, the "soul" of the Permanent Exhibition, like the museum's oral history collection, is heavily curated.

The third and final archival case study, featured in chapter 3, is the USC Shoah Foundation—the Institute for Visual History and Education (or Shoah Foundation). It should be noted that the Shoah Foundation is still in a relative period of transition from its establishment in 1994 as an independent operation to its incorporation as a part of the University of Southern California in 2006. Having completed both its campaign to interview Holocaust witnesses and its goal to digitize its holdings of almost 52,000 testimonies, the Shoah Foundation is shifting its attention toward making its archives accessible to students, researchers,

and the general public and to addressing genocides other than the Holocaust. This transition from testimony production to dissemination requires not only a major redirection of its energies and staff to new tasks, but also involves the foundation's integration into the academic environment of the University of Southern California, including its library collections. In particular, the Shoah Foundation must now confront the challenges of activating its testimonies beyond the archive, making them useful across a diverse range of venues and in response to past and contemporary genocides and human rights abuses.

The structure and interface of the Shoah Foundation's collection of digitized, online testimonies, which is made available through its Visual History Archive (or VHA) on an Internet2 subscriber-based network, presents limitations as well as possibilities. How does the interface of the VHA potentially encourage the process of searching within testimonies, rather than the careful viewing and listening that is often not only an analytical but also an ethical demand of working with such interviews? Does the segmentation and instrumentalization of VHA witness interviews potentially position them as sources of historical illustration rather than as complex and textured sources in their own right? These questions are integral not only to the case of the Shoah Foundation but also to our understanding of other Holocaust testimony archives and the inheritance of traumatic memory.

Although in each of the following chapters I delve into the categories of "exemplary" and "circulating" witnesses, chapter 4 focuses on those witnesses who delivered accounts to each of the three archives at the center of this book. Cross-referencing catalogues of interviewees in each of the three institutions, I was able to generate a pool of at least fourteen subjects who belonged in this category. They are crucial to highlighting the particular qualities of testimony construction by isolating across each of the three sites the interactions between witnesses and a diverse range of archival practices.

The framing of Holocaust testimonies in turn impacts the ways in which other genocides are documented. The conclusion addresses that issue by examining how the Shoah Foundation consulted with and provided training to the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam), an independent Cambodian research institute compiling written records, photographs, and video testimonies of the Cambodian genocide perpetrated between 1975 and 1979. DC-Cam staff members have now created their own pilot interviews at the Shoah Foundation's Los Angeles offices, as well as developed a pre-interview questionnaire for their witnesses directly based on the foundation's framework for Holocaust testimonies.

That archival cooperation raises some larger, pressing questions regarding the challenges posed by mobilizing the Holocaust as a paradigm for framing

transnational testimony archives. Do the particular cultures and approaches of Holocaust institutions translate to other, non-Holocaust contexts? Can they obscure the historical and individual textures of other suffering? In order to engage those and other issues concerning the future of documenting genocide, it is first crucial to examine the diverse origins and approaches to framing Holocaust testimony.