

A YALE UNIVERSITY AND NEW HAVEN COMMUNITY PROJECT: FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL

Yale's Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies is internationally recognized as an innovator, videotaping eyewitness accounts of the Holocaust, making these accounts intellectually accessible, and creating educational materials. The archive has grown from a collection of 183 testimonies deposited at Yale by the Holocaust Survivors Film Project (HSFP) in 1981, to almost 4,500 testimonies in twenty-two languages recorded at Yale and by its affiliated projects in Europe, North and South America, and Israel. The result has been numerous documentaries, books, journal articles, music compositions, teaching units, and videotaping projects documenting the Cambodian genocide, the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II, ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, and others. Prizes have been awarded to works about or benefiting from viewing the testimonies, among them a Grammy, an Emmy, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and recognition at major film festivals. Although given to individuals or groups for their creative and intellectual efforts, without our witness and survivor accounts, this would not have happened.

Thirty-four years ago, a brainstorm and the collaborative work of a few dedicated people with limited resources but limitless imaginations marked the humble beginnings of the Holocaust Survivors Film Project, the predecessor organization of the Fortunoff Video Archive. I can remember attending meetings in the mid 1970s of a committee that initiated, planned, and completed the construction of a monument in New Haven to those who

perished in the Holocaust. I admired the resolve of New Haven area survivors to publicly remember and recognize what had happened to their families, their communities, and those with no one left to remember them. The monument was formally dedicated in 1977.

In February 1979, representatives of the New Haven Jewish Federation and WTNH-TV-Channel 8 came together to discuss a documentary focusing on the monument's dedication, to be produced and moderated by Laurel Vlock. Malcolm Webber and Arthur Spiegel were among the attendees. At that meeting, someone suggested that Vlock contact Dori Laub, a child survivor and New Haven psychiatrist. The synergy between Vlock and Laub led to a videotaping session in Laub's office on the evening of May 2nd. Laub contacted two survivors whom he knew, and Spiegel suggested others. Vlock arranged for a professional video crew, and four survivors agreed to participate. They began at 6:30pm and did not finish until well after midnight. Vlock and Laub both realized that what they had recorded was extraordinary and that the impact of these stories should be shared.

It was suggested that they contact William Rosenberg, president of the local chapter of the Farband, a labor Zionist organization, with many survivors as members. Rosenberg invited Vlock and Laub to attend the June meeting of the Farband at which Rosenberg expressed his passionate belief in the importance of survivors documenting their experiences in their own words and voices. The Farband pledged \$1,300 to support the effort and individuals also made contributions totaling some \$2,500.

Realizing that more than an ad hoc effort would be needed to undertake such a significant venture, the Holocaust Survivors Film Project (HSFP) was formally launched on June 28th with a press conference at Rosenberg's home attended by New Haven Mayor Frank Logue, as well as by a representative of the planned United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, local Jewish and Christian clergy, leaders of the Federation, and many survivors. A second taping session was held at Rosenberg's home in July. By August the HSFP was formally incorporated with assistance from Melvin Ditman, himself a child of survivors, who donated his legal services and became one of the directors of the fledgling organization. Rosenberg became the president and Ludwig Friedenberg the treasurer. Several community members provided financial support for additional taping sessions. Soon testimonies were also recorded in Hartford, Bridgeport, Kansas City and Israel. Laub remembers many meetings with HSFP board members and volunteers held in Vlock's kitchen in order to plan taping sessions and chart the course of the future.

Through his wife, Renée (one of the first four survivors taped), Geoffrey Hartman, a professor of English and comparative literature at Yale, was invited to join the effort. Hartman, born in Frankfurt and brought by a *Kindertransport* to England, quickly realized the educational and research potential of these video documents and agreed to write a funding request to the New Haven Foundation. In 1980 that request was approved. It provided the resources to continue taping and also to produce an educational program for the New Haven school system. Joseph Ciaburri of the New Haven Savings Bank provided space for the videotaping. At roughly the same time, Vlock received a commitment from New York's WNEW-TV, Channel 5, to air a documentary based on the testimonies. Vlock would be the producer,

and the resulting documentary, *Forever Yesterday*, won a New York Emmy award. Hartman, appointed at that time to head Yale's development campaign for Judaic Studies, was also exploring having the testimonies deposited at Yale.

The HSFP published several newsletters during this period and expanded taping to Boston, Palm Beach, and Norfolk. Many volunteers, including Dana Kline and Paula Their, became part of the teams that taped marathon sessions, often on weekends, with at least six sessions in one day. Laub and Vlock were indefatigable, and 183 testimonies were recorded under the auspices of the HSFP.

In 1981, all the original tapes were formally deposited at Yale University with the encouragement of Yale President A. Bartlett Giamatti. Geoffrey Hartman made the Video Archive an associate project of Yale's fund-raising for Judaic Studies; and the following year, helped by a start-up grant from the Charles H. Revson Foundation, the Video Archive was established as part of the Manuscripts and Archives division of the University's Sterling Memorial Library, an internationally recognized research center. The formal inauguration was attended by Giamatti, New Haven Mayor Biagio Dilieto, Revson Foundation President Eli N. Evans, and Elie Wiesel. Staff was hired, and Revson funded a major conference entitled "Knowing and Not Knowing."

At this time we also began a partnership with Selfhelp Community Services to videotape survivors in New York City. Selfhelp, is a social services agency founded by survivors and refugees in the 1930s. Its staff, led by

Adele Friedman, organized taping sessions in their Forest Hills office twice a year. This partnership resulted in over 350 testimonies.

The concept of affiliated projects, in order to expand the videotaping of survivors throughout the United States, was initiated and a formal agreement was signed with U.C.L.A. and the 1939 Club of Los Angeles. This consortium recorded fifty-three testimonies between 1983 and 1984, copies of which became part of the Yale Video Archive collection.

An eighteen-minute program was produced for the 1983 American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors in Washington D.C. to encourage witnesses to come forward and give their testimony. The program introduced and promoted the goals of the Video Archive project. Geoffrey Hartman, Laurel Vlock, Dori Laub, and Malcolm Webber presented a seminar. Hartman contacted Jeshayahu Weinberg, the director of Beth Hatefutsoth, Israel's Museum of the Diaspora, and later the first director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Weinberg signed an affiliation agreement that same year. Eighty-three testimonies were videotaped in Israel by Beth Hatefutsoth between 1984 and 1989. It was the first international videotaping project of this kind.

“The Educational and Research Use of the Yale Video Archive” was the title of a conference in 1983 at which Raul Hilberg gave the keynote address. An additional grant from Revson began a cooperative undertaking with Facing History and Ourselves, a teacher-training institute in the Boston area. Professor Lawrence L. Langer, a well-known scholar of Holocaust literature, began to watch survivor testimonies as part of this joint project. The goal was to produce educational materials for classroom. Facing History and

Ourselves published *Elements of Time* in 1989, a teachers' manual for using edited programs of Holocaust testimonies, including many previously produced by the Video Archive staff.

The Revson grant also funded a conference entitled "Education and the Holocaust: New Responsibilities and Cooperative Ventures," with the goal of promoting other such cooperative efforts. Yehuda Bauer of Hebrew University was the keynote speaker. Representatives of many institutions, some established and others in the planning stage, such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the New York Holocaust Museum, the Jewish Museum in New York, as well as several from Europe, attended.

At the same time as these high profile activities were occurring, Sandra Rosenstock, the archivist at the Video Archive, was facing the formidable task of providing intellectual access to the testimonies. It was the right time and place for this challenge, since Yale's Department of Manuscripts and Archives had become one of the founders of a consortium to develop a database for manuscript and archival materials within the Research Libraries Group. While defining the functional requirements for this system, Rosenstock, Katharine Morton (Yale's Director of Manuscripts and Archives) and Nancy F. Lyon (database manager), realized that Machine Readable Cataloging (MARC) records for the testimonies would maximize intellectual access to them. Their efforts formed the basis for all future Video Archive bibliographic records. In 1984, the first bibliographic records of our Holocaust testimonies were entered into the newly launched Research Libraries Group Information Network Archives and Manuscripts Control file.

As the Revson Foundation continued its support for expanded videotaping, additional interviewers were needed. With assistance from Hartman, Laub, Rosenstock, and Vlock, Dana Kline organized a six-week series of classes to meet this need with volunteers from the community. The original class of twenty-two read a required list of books and met weekly under Kline's direction. Vlock and Laub both led sessions. It was also at this time, in September 1984, that I joined the staff of the Video Archive as manager.

Over the course of the next several years, many affiliate projects were added and Geoffrey Hartman began promoting the concept internationally beyond Israel. The Revson Foundation funded much of the international taping, and Kline and Laub traveled nationally and internationally to train volunteer interviewers.

Apart from small, private ventures, there had been, with the exception of Claude Lanzmann (director of the award-winning film *Shoah*), no organized videotaping anywhere abroad. Our success in this area made fund raising a constant necessity. With support from the New Haven community, Barbara Wareck, Willie Rosenberg, and Arthur Spiegel, co-chaired "An Evening with Claude Lanzmann," in 1986. President Giamatti also recognized the Archive's work, designating \$100,000 from discretionary funds for the Video Archive endowment.

In 1987, Willie Rosenberg signed a "Deed of Gift," formally changing the status of the original 183 HSFP testimonies from a deposit to a permanent donation. The "Holocaust Survivors Film Project" dissolved itself, and donated its remaining funds to the Video Archive. In April of that year, the Greater New Haven Jewish Federation sponsored "A Concert for Life" by

the New Haven Symphony Orchestra. It benefited the Video Archive and music programs for children in New Haven.

The fifth anniversary of the Video Archive was marked by a conference in October, sponsored by the Revson Foundation, entitled “In an Era of Testimony.” The Israeli poet, journalist, and filmmaker Haim Gouri presented his film *Flames in the Ashes*. At the keynote address by Eli Wiesel in Woolsey Hall, which was filled to overflowing, Yale President Benno Schmidt announced a major gift to endowment by Alan A. Fortunoff in memory of his parents Clara and Max Fortunoff. This gift permanently established the Video Archive and added the Fortunoff name to its title.

In 1988, Marvin and Murray Lender approached Geoffrey Hartman to join them in an effort to provide teacher training to greater New Haven schools for Holocaust education programs. The Lenders provided the funding for the Holocaust Education/Prejudice Reduction Program (HEPRP). In addition to local teacher training sessions and curricular enrichment programs for students, including important educational videos chosen by the Fortunoff Archive, teachers were given support to attend five-day summer institutes at Facing History and Ourselves in Massachusetts and a three week educational trip to Poland and Israel. In 1992 the program sponsored a trip to Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Israel for students in the greater New Haven schools. Thirty young people from fourteen school systems, four local teachers, the program director, and I participated in “Eyewitness to History.” After the trip, these students became speakers and educators in the New Haven area.

In 1999, a board was organized for HEPRP, chaired by Gordon Gaballe and Barbara Segaloff. Funding from individual donors and family foundations has supported a local “Facing History and Ourselves” annual summer institute in which over 100 public and private school teachers have participated.

Lawrence Langer’s book, *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory*, was published by Yale University Press in 1991. Based on eight years of viewing and studying the Fortunoff Video Archive holdings, it was named one of the ten best books of the year by the *New York Times Book Review*. That same year it received the national Book Critics Circle Award and the Eugene K. Kayden Press Prize for the most distinguished book in the humanities published by an American university press. In the 1995 centennial issue of the *New York Times Book Review*, it was listed as one of the one hundred most important books of the century. Among other distinctions, “Different Trains” by Steve Reich, which includes sound bites from the Fortunoff testimonies, won a 1990 Grammy award in the classical music category.

Accessioning new testimonies from across the country and around the world, copying them for preservation purposes, providing training for newly affiliated projects, cataloging the testimonies, assisting students and researchers, and producing educational programs continued. Sandra Rosenstock, the archivist who began much of this important work, left for Princeton, and I was appointed to her position in 1990. Although there was some attrition due to illness and relocations in the original group of interviewers trained by Dana Kline in 1984, these volunteers continued their dedicated work and, thanks to them, over sixty testimonies were recorded in

the Yale studio on an annual basis for many years. Geoffrey Hartman, while lecturing extensively abroad, used the opportunity to develop contacts that led to the founding of affiliate projects in London, Paris, the former Yugoslavia, Berlin, Bratislava, Prague, Buenos Aires, and Brussels. At the same time, affiliated projects continued to be initiated in many U.S. cities.

1992 marked the tenth anniversary of the Fortunoff Video Archive at Yale. A fund raising reception and dinner was chaired by Barbara Wareck and Leon Weinberg with assistance from William Rosenberg. Eli Wiesel was the keynote speaker. Yale's interim president, Howard Lamar, welcomed Eli Evans, President of the Revson Foundation, as well as Alan and Helene Fortunoff and several of their children. A conference "The Future of Memory" was also convened.

The inception of projects in partnership with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum began with a continuation of taping in Israel, first with Masua, a kibbutz with the mission of Holocaust education, and then independently. The former coordinator of the Beth Hatefutsoth project, Nathan Beyrak, continued to work with us. We also instituted taping in Eastern Europe. Supported by Revson and in partnership with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Ghetto Fighters Kibbutz, Beyrak brought teams to Poland, Ukraine and Belarus.

Starting in 1994, Steven Spielberg's Visual History of the Shoah Foundation called upon Geoffrey Hartman, Dana Kline, and me for advice in launching their survivor videotaping project. In 1995 Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation provided a cataloging grant to the Fortunoff Video Archive which enabled an expansion of its staff and increased its ability to catalog

many more testimonies. Richard Szary, Director of Manuscripts and Archives, provided additional space for staff expansion, and also reserved a section of the Manuscripts and Archives Reading Room for Video Archive viewers.

In 1996, contacted by Alan Fortunoff, the independent filmmakers Joshua Greene and Shiva Kumar began working on a documentary in collaboration with the Fortunoff staff. At the same time, Alan Fortunoff and Greene spearheaded a major fundraising initiative which ultimately raised almost \$500,000 for preservation purposes. Using these funds over the course of the next several years, thousands of our oldest videocassettes were restored and reformatted. New York's Museum of Jewish Heritage: A Living Memorial to the Holocaust shared the cost of this preservation work for those testimonies recorded as one of our affiliates - again through the good graces of the Revson Foundation.

Professors Robert Burt and Harold Koh of the Yale Law School were instrumental in organizing our 1998 conference "Searching for Memory and Justice: The Holocaust and Apartheid," co-sponsored by the Law School's Orvill H. Schell Jr. Center for International Human Rights. Speakers included Saul Friedlander (U.C.L.A. and Tel Aviv University), Michael Marrus (University of Toronto), Yaron Ezrahi (Hebrew University), the Minister of Justice of South Africa, members of the constitutional Court of South Africa,, directors and staff of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, South African activists, journalist Philip Gourevitch, and scholars from France, Germany, and the United States. It was a unique opportunity for scholars of two different persecuted peoples to learn from

each other. An exhibit at Yale's Sterling Memorial Library showcased the conference.

1998 marked another important event. Yale's Library Shelving Facility (LSF) opened. It is a state of the art storage facility with rigid temperature and humidity controls and particulate air filtration. The storage modules are entered no more than twice a day in order to maintain the ideal climate. Between 1996 and 1998, Fortunoff staff, led by Debra Bush, barcoded over 13,000 cassettes to prepare them for the move to the LSF. Storing the cassettes at the LSF has insured many additional years of life for these unique materials.

In 1997, a book was published in Slovakia based on the testimonies produced by the Milan Šimečka Foundation, our affiliate project in Bratislava. A subsequent volume was published in English in 2005. An international journal *Studies on the audio-visual testimony of victims of the Nazi crimes and genocides (Etudes sur le témoignage audiovisuel des victimes et génocides nazis)* was founded in June 1998 by the Fondation Auschwitz, our affiliate project in Brussels. That year as well, the coordinators of our affiliate project at the Moses Mendelssohn Center for European Jewish Studies at the University of Potsdam, Germany, edited two volumes based on their work.

The Revson Foundation provided major funding for *Witness: Voices from the Holocaust*, a documentary for which I was Associate Producer, and which resulted from Greene's and Kumar's efforts. Alan Fortunoff and the Dorot Foundation were among other donors who made this possible.

Witness was critically acclaimed when it was nationally broadcast by PBS

on Yom Hashoah of 2000. It won awards in several film festivals and was broadcast in Canada and Israel. The Free Press published a book of the same title, which contains an expanded version of the documentary, and includes an introduction by Lawrence Langer and an afterword by Geoffrey Hartman. At the same time, major gifts to endowment by the Hilda and Jacob Blaustein Foundation, Darrell Ross (Yale, 1969), and Alan M. Fortunoff reinforced the permanent status of the Fortunoff Video Archive.

In 2002, we received a multi-year preservation grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. We also became a Beta test site for a robotic preservation system. The new technology enabled us to preserve and reformat a much larger number of cassettes at no additional cost. At the same time, these testimonies were digitized to an access format.

The twentieth anniversary of the Fortunoff Video Archive was marked in October 2002 by an international conference entitled “The Contribution of Oral Testimony to Holocaust and Genocide Studies.” The conference was supported by Darrell Ross, as well as by the Revson Foundation, Patricia and Robert Weis (Yale, 1941) and James and Jacqueline Gordon (Yale, 1998). We dedicated the conference to the memory of four people without whose help the Fortunoff Archive could not have succeeded. Alan Fortunoff had continued to take an active interest in the Archive and supported it year after year until his death in July 2000. Laurel Vlock’s initial vision sparked the entire enterprise. Without her, the HSFP would not have come into being, and she continued to support the Fortunoff Video Archive. Willie Rosenberg, head of the Farband, seconded Laurel Vlock’s initiative enthusiastically. He was a true guardian: he came to the Archive regularly and always “rallied the troops” when there was a financial need. Dr. Sigi

Ziering, a survivor whose testimony was recorded at Yale, and who became a member of our Honorary Board of Advisors, had personally funded our Israel videotaping for many years, and also raised significant funds from others. Geoffrey Hartman recognized their enormous contributions.

Martin Bútorá, then the United States Ambassador from Slovakia to the United States, but former director of our affiliate project in Bratislava, and Eli Evans spoke at the dinner. Elie Wiesel presented the keynote address. The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscripts Library co-sponsored a literary symposium, "Holocaust Literature: Freedoms and Responsibilities." The panelists were Aharon Appelfeld, author and professor of Hebrew literature at Ben-Gurion University; E.L. Doctorow, author and professor of English at New York University; Irving Feldman, poet and professor of English at SUNY Buffalo; and Thane Rosenbaum, author and professor of law and literature at Fordham University. With the support of a grant from Alice Ginott Cohn and Ted Cohn, Duke University Press published most of the conference papers, guest-edited by Geoffrey Hartman under the title "The Humanities of Testimony," in the 2006 summer issue of *Poetics Today*.

In 2004, I produced *Remembering Częstochowa, Poland*, an edited video program, for a museum exhibit in Częstochowa, Poland. The exhibit was also shown in Warsaw, the Polish consulate in New York, and the United States Senate before moving to university sites throughout the United States.

We began a joint videotaping project with the Bergen-Belsen Memorial and Museum in 2002. Although we already had many testimonies of survivors of the Belsen camp, we now also focused on the Belsen displaced persons camp. We interviewed people who had staffed the rescue effort after

liberation in both the concentration and the displaced persons camps. Excerpts from these testimonies are part of the permanent exhibit for the new Bergen-Belsen museum that opened in the fall of 2007.

“Witnessing: Sites of Destruction and the Representation of the Holocaust,” a conference held in January 2009, was planned by the Museum and the Fortunoff Archive. Scholars from Europe, Israel, and the United States presented papers. Geoffrey Hartman gave the opening address. Lawrence Langer and Annette Wieviorka (a major French historian who had coordinated our project in Paris), were also keynote speakers. A publication including several of the talks resulted: *AugenZeugen: Fotos, Filme und Zeitzeugenberichte in der neuen Dauerausstellung der Gedenkstätte Bergen-Belsen: Hintergrund und Kontext.*

In 2004 a partnership began with the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. Designed by Peter Eisenman, it has an Information Centre for which we provided 1,500 hours of testimony. The Information Centre augmented many of the testimonies by translating them into German and providing maps, historical context, and bibliographic information for student use. The “Fortunoff” room, in which their staff works with students, was inaugurated at a symposium, “Living with Memory: Survivors of the Holocaust Tell Their Stories” in September 2008. Geoffrey Hartman and I presented papers at that event. A publication followed the conference: *“Ich bin Stimme der sechs Millionen:” das Videoarchiv im Ort der Information.* We continue to work with the *Denkmal* as its program expands.

In 2006, we produced a program entitled *Voices from the Yugoslav Holocaust* which I presented at an international conference in Sarajevo.

This was our first program produced with subtitling. The testimonies were in Serbo-Croatian-Bosnian, Hebrew, and English. We have had several subsequent screenings. In 2009 we began streaming all of our edited programs from our website (www.library.yale.edu/testimonies). This has increased their use by tens of thousands every year.

To mark 25 years at Yale, a conference was held in November of 2007, *Testimonies across the Disciplines*. Speakers were Omer Bartov, Robert Burt, Lawrence Langer, Carol Bernstein, Henryk Gryberg, Itzek Gottesman, Walter Reich, and Jay Winter. Associated events included Haim Gouri's reflections on the Eichmann trial, sponsored by the greater New Haven Jewish Federation, and Taylor Krauss, a Yale graduate, who showed testimonies recorded by *Voices of Rwanda*, a project modeled on the Fortunoff Video Archive.

Geoffrey Hartman was given the Distinguished Achievement Award for Holocaust Studies and Research in November 2010 by the Holocaust Educational Foundation. The honor recognized his pioneering work in founding the Fortunoff Video Archive, and his role in its many innovative and educational activities and programs, as well as his published work about testimony.

Ten years of planning the migration of all of our testimonies to digital files transitioned to implementation. Our testimonies were originally recorded on analogue video formats for which manufacturing of the recording and playback equipment ceased many years ago. Yale University Library IT and

Manuscripts and Archives staff designed the required systems which have been successfully operating since February 2011, when the first tape was digitized. After the original analog tapes are retrieved from storage, they are carefully inspected and cleaned, while metadata about their condition is recorded. Three streams of digital video are produced simultaneously: one lossless file for preservation purposes, one smaller file for duplication, and a highly compressed file for eventual streaming access. We are designing a user interface which will provide side-by-side access to time-coded finding aids and the testimonies in a secure, password-protected environment. Access to these will be provided to other universities and museums for research purposes. Funding for the migration was initiated in 2007 by a leadership gift from Michael Vlock and Karen Pritzker. Other major supporters include Michael Friedman (Yale, 1955), The Morton K. and Jane Blaustein Foundation, Professor Peter Baldwin and Lisbet Rausig, the Conference of Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Inc., the Revson Foundation, and the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah.

Based on recent major gifts from the Fortunoff family, we will have future endowment income to support the forward migration of the video files – an essential process in a digital environment. We will continue to provide expert advice to researchers, both remotely and in-person, at the same time we expand our educational outreach and create additional edited programs.

I don't believe anyone in 1979 could have visualized that a late night videotaping session could have grown into what the Fortunoff Video Archive is today. Hundreds of people view the testimonies every year. Among them have been students from all over the world, musicians, playwrights, dramaturges, artists, novelists, historians, theologians,

psychologists, physicians, filmmakers, journalists, and museum exhibit designers. This year, like every other, we have processed numerous authorizations to publish from those wishing to include testimony excerpts in their conference papers, journal articles, documentaries, and books. A Yale college senior paper based on research in the Fortunoff Video Archive won a prize at graduation in 2004. What is striking in looking back at these last thirty years is the many, many people who contributed so much time, energy, inspiration, money, and hard work. I wish I could name them all, but it would extend beyond a reader's tolerance this already lengthy article. I am personally grateful for having had the opportunity to help build this collection, but equally important, for the privilege of meeting and working with so many wonderful people and forming lifelong friendships.

Each and every survivor who has offered to share their story with us, often at great emotional cost, has left a precious legacy for us and for generations to come. The interviewers who have listened, and continue to listen to the testimonies, have also made a contribution whose value is incalculable. We have employed many students, and some tell me their lives were changed by working with these materials. The Yale University Library considers the Fortunoff Video Archive one of its premier collections, and it does this based not on emotional factors, but the Archive's obvious value, demonstrated by its many visitors and the papers, books, journal articles, music compositions, and other works resulting from viewing the testimonies.

The generation of survivors is sadly diminished every year. We will not forget the promise made to the survivors in New Haven when they entrusted their tapes to us some thirty years ago to preserve their witness and help others, young and old, to understand what they endured. I hope that those

who have shared their stories with us knew that their memories will be safeguarded and live after them providing countless and rich resources for scholars, educators, and others wanting to learn more about the most important historic event of the twentieth century from those who experienced it.

Joanne Weiner Rudof, Archivist

Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies

Yale University

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www.library.yale.edu/testimonies