An Unexplored Intersectionality: Deaf Jews of the Holocaust

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Candidate for the degree

Bachelor of Arts

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

College Honors

Departmental Distinction in History

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1) Introduction:

A) Introduction:

Over the decades since it occurred the Holocaust has been viewed through many lenses. Though there has been great variation in all aspects of study, the most hotly contested area seems to be that of representation. Debate over this topic is referenced extensively by most Holocaust scholars, conflicts over Jews and gentiles, Poles and Germans, and even POWs and homosexuals. Among these arguments have been pushes for representation of the disabled. However, this representation has generally been relegated to oppression during the T-4 program and the disabled as a uniform group, not those specifying different subgroups within the disabled population.

Consequently, the study of Deaf in the Holocaust is very limited. This limitation, however, is nothing compared to the study of Deaf Jews, which is almost nonexistent. Deaf Jews in the Holocaust are often simply viewed as individual Jews who were deaf; however, Deaf Jews are actually an important intersectionality with their own unique challenges, experiences, and community. This is specifically in regard to topics of isolation, communication, dual persecution, resiliency and hardihood, reliance on others, independence/resourcefulness, old deaf communities and loss, new deaf communities, and mode of sharing experiences.

B) Reasoning for Thesis:

As a Jew my heritage had initiated an awareness of, and interest in, the Holocaust early in my life. This interest was compounded by my mother's intense involvement in the subject. Though not Jewish herself, my mother, Patti Durr, developed a strong awareness of the Holocaust at a young age as well. While flipping channels late one night, she stumbled upon a

documentary featuring intense footage from the Bergen Belsen Concentration Camp liberation, and was struck by the massive horror of the Shoah. This early interest was what led her to leap at the opportunity when a few Deaf survivors reached out to the Lexington School for the Deaf where she was teaching. She invited them to come speak with incredible enthusiasm, unaware that what she heard would later drive her to put years of work into the almost empty field.

Before this presentation my mother, though Deaf herself, had never even thought of Deaf[1] people, or Deaf Jews in the Shoah. She went on to write and direct a play inspired by the experience called *Meta*, named after one of the survivors who spoke. Years after she became even more involved while working at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf. NTID had a small collection of video interviews with Deaf survivors conducted by Simon Carmel, my mother was able to expand this collection with a few of her own interviews and a two films she created from two separate survivor testimonies.

The inspiration of my mother's incredible work would be enough to draw anyone's interest; however, I was also drawn to the subject by experiences of my own. Last year I applied to participate in the Bergen Belsen International Summer School "Memory in the Digital Age" at the suggestion of Professor de Syon. He thought of me because of my dual interests in Holocaust studies and the field of digital humanities. I did this with no real hope of being selected. To my great surprise, I was picked to join 19 other students, from thirteen different countries, for a week at the former Bergen Belsen camp. This just happened to be the very site of the footage that had first caught the interest of my mother. This was an intense, immersive, week-long Holocaust studies program, and an experience which will stay with me for a very long

[1] Uppercase D Deaf represents the cultural identity; lowercase d Deaf represents the medical condition. To ensure that both definitions are acknowledged, this work uses the uppercase D exclusively.

time.

Before attending the summer school, I was given a selection of material from the organization to read, in order to familiarize myself with what I would be learning. My mother also provided me with a few resources. Though there are very few Deaf Jewish survivors, my mother happened to have testimony of Deaf Jewish Bergen Belsen survivor named Herta M.[2] In addition, this particular survivor had a hearing sister who survived alongside her, and later recorded testimony at Yale University as well. I watched both testimonies before leaving for my trip.

Every survivor testimony I had ever seen previously had been incredibly powerful in its own way. However, while watching Herta's testimony I was struck by how much her identity as a Deaf person made her story unique in ways I had not heard before. This feeling was repeated when I watched Herta's hearing older sister Renee's testimony. Though Renee herself was not Deaf, she was a CODA like myself, and this made her experience just as unique as Herta's. It is from Herta and Renee's testimonies that I derived the first themes I would use to prove my thesis. I utilized these themes to search other testimonies for more examples, and added more themes as analyzed the unique experiences of each individual.

Upon beginning the program I was overwhelmed by the wealth of information provided by the speakers, in the Bergen Belsen exhibition, and the Ahlem Memorial we also visited. As the week went on, we studied a great deal about how many different affiliations, identities and intersectionalities were persecuted in the Holocaust and particularly in Bergen Belsen. However, despite this push to acknowledge all nationalities, religious groups, ethnic groups, and Nazi created categories, there was little to no mention of individuals with disabilities. Conversation

[2] Yale does not include the full last name on their testimony records

on that topic was extended only to mention that they would have been in the Anti-social category, which was a broad Nazi defined group, including homosexuals, criminals, mentally ill, disabled, homeless, and many others. I could not help but be surprised by the lack of interest about prisoners with disabilities, especially because I knew of the existence of Herta's incredible and unique story. In addition, Herta herself, and any other Jews with a disability who had survived immediate elimination, would have been classified under the Jewish category, not Anti-social. This is a certainty because if the disabled were even delivered to camps, they were to be immediately eliminated. Meaning, any disabled survivors of the camps must have hid their disability, necessitating their inclusion in the Jewish category, not Anti-social.

I had initially proposed a thesis to Professor de Syon on the topic of Holocaust education and its importance. My experience at Bergen Belsen definitely provided me with enough information to complete a thesis on that topic. Nonetheless, it had also cemented my deep interest in the experiences of Deaf Jews in the Holocaust, and the lack of focus they receive. It is for that reason that I decided to move my focus from Holocaust education, to the study of Deaf Jews in the Holocaust.

My other strong motivation for pursuing a thesis was my interest in digital humanities. I was first introduced to this term by Dr. Paul Jaskot's presentation last spring. Jaskot shared his digital humanities focused research of the architecture of Auschwitz, demonstrating the power of this new field to bring history to life. After seeing this presentation I became fascinated by the possibilities made real by technology. I had expressed this new interest to Dr. de Syon, who introduced me to first to Jaskot, and later and later to the Bergen Belsen International Summer School. Needless to say, this thesis would not have happened without his help, and I would be remiss not to acknowledge this, or my great gratitude. Thanks to Dr. de Syon I was able to get

Dr. Jaskot's contact information after his presentation. Dr. Jaskot kindly shared a few digital humanities mapping systems with me that I was able to experiment with and utilize in my Political Geography class last semester. This class, taught by the amazing Professor Smith, allowed me to further my study of digital humanities.

While the summer program did not have the focus I was expecting on this field, it did include the use of a very interesting app that the memorial utilizes. This app allows visitors to use an ipad to view where buildings on the site used to exist, as most of the structures were destroyed after the camp's liberation. We were given a lecture on the app, and a workshop, both of which are described in detail in the blog of the summer school (included in my bibliography). I was also able to see digital humanities used to great effect in Ahlem Memorial we visited in Hannover. This memorial was built in 2014 and is the model of a modern museum. It included ipad stations, interactive timeline maps, and a wealth of easily accessible visual testimony.

Digital humanities is new field that expands and changes by the day. Therefore I was able to consider a wealth of options when considering how to present my research within the field. Utilizing technology to bring history to life, and overcome the obstacle of time, appealed to me greatly; I saw this done most successfully in the museums, memorials and exhibitions I had the fortune to visit. I was able to spend ample time in the Bergen Belsen exhibition, the Ahlem memorial, and the U.S. Holocaust Museum. In each of these locations I was able to identify things I loved, and things I would love to change. Based on these experiences I have decided to pursue a thesis creating a modern exhibit about Deaf Jews in the Holocaust. I plan to include all of my research to fill the hypothetical exhibit in a design document, which would also outline the physical exhibit. In the design document I have outlined my planned uses of digital humanities, as well as interactive installations.

Finally, I was given the incredible opportunity of hearing from memory expert Aleida Assmann on my first day at the summer school. Assmann is a great authority on cultural memory, including the identification of three different types of cultural memory. After her presentation I was inspired to learn more about the studies of collective and cultural memory, and I also worked to keep this field in mind as I created my exhibit. Collective and cultural memory are often given great consideration in the fields of sharing and teaching history. Consequently this research was a great asset in creating an exhibit that displayed research to others in an effective way.

2) <u>Background:</u>

A) <u>Intersectionality:</u>

My thesis statement operates under two assumptions: that the reader is familiar with the term "intersectionality", and that Deaf Jews qualify as an intersectional group. As intersectionality is a recently popularized term, and its definition is often up for debate, the first assumption is difficult to assess. Kimberle Crenshaw is credited with coining this term in her paper "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics."[3] Crenshaw began examining this topic in an effort to expose how "dominant conceptions of discrimination condition us to think about subordination as disadvantage occurring along a single categorical axis."[4] In other words, antidiscrimination law tends to focus on a single minority identity at a time, centering attention on the privileged individuals within each group; for example, the study of racism tends to be centered on black *men* and the study of sexism on *white* women. Crenshaw argues that focus often effectively erases the struggle of black women, as they are affected by both systems of oppression. This intersection creates "discrete sources of discrimination," which are difficult to define, and as a result, often ignored by academic study.[5]

After Crenshaw coined this term to explain this phenomenon of the invisible oppression of black women, it was used to describe other groups that have multiple minority statuses. Further studies lead Crenshaw herself to support that:

> "African-American women, like other women of color, like other socially marginalized people all over the world, were facing all kinds of dilemmas and

[3] Kimberle Crenshaw "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989, no. 1 (1989): 139-167, http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=uclf, 139.
[4] Crenshaw (1989), 140.
[5] Ibid.

> challenges as a consequence of intersectionality, intersections of race and gender, of heterosexism, transphobia, xenophobia, ableism, all of these social dynamics come together and create challenges that are sometimes quite unique."[6]

This wide inclusion is echoed in Patricia Collins' definition of the word: "the term intersectionality references the critical insight that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability, and age operate not as unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but rather as reciprocally constructing phenomena."[7] I found this definition to the be most succinct and accurate, not only because of its similarity to Crenshaw's thought, but also because of the corollary it includes at the end: "despite this general consensus, definitions of what counts as intersectionality are far from clear."[8] This allows for the inclusion of additional categories of identity, as well as establishing that it is difficult to what actually qualifies as intersectionality.

Due to the fact that this term is still ambiguous and lacks distinct parameters, it is difficult to confidently say whether or not Deaf Jews as a group qualify as an intersectionality. Collins' and Crenshaw's descriptions of the term indicate that Deaf Jews would be an intersectionality, as they are a group facing both religious and ableist discrimination. However, this paper does not strive to definitively prove that Deaf Jews are an intersectionality, only that their treatment during the Holocaust establishes them as such during this period. Deaf Jews faced persecution not only as Deaf individuals, but also as Jewish individuals. Overall, in Holocaust studies focus is placed on religious discrimination of *hearing* Jews and ableist discrimination on Deaf *gentiles*, ignoring the experience of the Deaf Jews, just as the experience of black women is ignored. During a TED Talk Crenshaw asked the audience, "so what do you call being impacted

[6] Kimberle Crenshaw, *The Urgency of Intersectionality,* TED Talk, 18:49, October 2016, https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality#t-652868.
[7] Patricia H. Collins, "Intersectionality's Definitional Dilemmas," *Annual Review of Sociology* 41, (2015)): 1-20, doi: 10.1146/annurev-soc-073014-112142, 1.
[8] Ibid.

by multiple forces, and then abandoned to fend for yourself? Intersectionality seemed to do it for me."[9] In the case of Deaf Jews, I am inclined to agree with Professor Crenshaw.

B) Literature Review:

Before beginning my project I first had to examine prior research on the various topics and subjects included in it. To this end I studied several texts. First, Nathan Wachtel's work on memory, particularly how it manifests in the collective. Next I specified my investigation of memory to Peter Novick's examination of Holocaust memory in his book *The Holocaust in American Life*. Novick's discussion of the formation of the Holocaust Museum itself lead me to Edward Linenthal's text: *Preserving Memory: the Struggle to Create America's Holocaust Museum.* This text not only provided much needed information on the struggle to represent the Holocaust, but also specific issues that come with creating a museum. I was able to read more on this topic in *Exhibiting Dilemmas* a collection of pieces about creating controversial Smithsonian exhibits. Finally I studied existing work on Deaf people during the Holocaust, and by extension, Deaf Jews in the Holocaust. I was able to study these topics at length in *Crying Hands* by Horst Biesold and *Deaf People in Hitler's Europe* a collection by Donna F. Ryan and John Schuchman. Though these works provided ample factual information, I still wanted to include work justifying the study of Deaf people and Deaf Jews during the Holocaust, and their testimony. Patricia Durr explains this eloquently in her article "Visual Histories: Recording, Preserving and Disseminating and Analyzing Deaf Stories." The combination of this research and analysis formed my Literature Review, and created a strong base with which to create my exhibit plan, beginning with Wachtel's piece on memory.

[9] Crenshaw (2016).

Nathan Wachtel's introduction for *History and Anthropology* is a comprehensive breakdown of the rise and evolution of collective memory in the world of history. Wachtel introduces this subject by analyzing the reliability of memory, its utilities, and its shortcomings. First, the author examines the increased use of oral archives. He credits this upswing in popularity of oral testimony to a recent movement, which pushes to question "official historiography."[10] Often the official view of history "tends to give pride of place to the dominant actors of history," or in common terms: history is written by the victors. Wachtel explains that the untold stories of the "'common people' – the dominated ones" can be saved "from oblivion with the help of oral testimonies."[11] As such, the field of oral history has often been examined in order to reveal this "counter-history," thereby creating a more comprehensive picture of the past.

The use of memory to question, or even replace, official historiography is of incredible importance to the subject of the Holocaust. As millions of people had direct experiences with this long event, there was (and is) a wealth of sources from which to harvest accounts of memory and testimony. These can add to and contest the meticulous, factual records taken by the Nazis. Consequently, Holocaust history is often shaped not only by classical historiography, but a heavy inclusion of memory and oral archives. Use of memory and oral archives as a main source for historical analysis is of further importance to my topic; because, the minimal amount of factual records on Deaf Jews puts even greater importance on individual accounts to supplement this lack of information.

[10] Nathan Wachtel, "Introduction," *History and Anthropology* (Great Britain: Hardwood Academic Publishers GmbH, 1986), 207.
[11] Wachtel, 207.

Historical opinion on memory had traditionally been that it was a "poor and fragile source."[12] Wachtel utilizes a few studies, included in *The Voice of the Past* by P. Thomson, to prove the previously underestimated power of memory. He then goes on to a very real concern of the authenticity of memory; that one event "experienced by several persons is related very differently years later by the same witnesses, depending on their later experiences and destinies."[13] Taking this truth into account reminds the historian that it is essential to question and examine memory before accepting it as certainty. Memory must be analyzed because, "there is no pure memory, only recollection."[14] While this may seem like a reason to discount memory as a source, Wachtel points out that "this is also true of every historical document," which "is already the product of a certain sifting process carried out by the author," not unlike recollection: the expression of memory.[15] Through this analysis Wachtel not only establishes memory and oral archives as legitimate sources, but also warns of real concerns a researcher must have when using such sources.

Wachtel also gives a concise summary of the "social frameworks of memory" and the two theorists whom first popularized the concept. First, Wachtel introduces the reader to Maurice Halbwachs, who first wrote on the idea of social thought in 1924. Halbwachs questions the nature of memory itself: is it "merely is physiological function? Or does it belong to another reality of the spiritual nature."[16] More pertinently to this topic, Halbwachs strives to prove that "one only ever remembers as a member of a social group," that all individual memories are

[12] Wachtel, 209.
[13] Wachtel, 209.
[14] Wacthel, 210.
[15] Wachtel, 210.
[16] Wachtel, 211.

shaped by the groups persons belong to, and the memories those groups hold.[17] This is Halbwachs establishing the concept of collective memory, "what he calls 'social thought.'"[18] Halbwachs' analysis warns the researcher of the importance of context when regarding memory, specifically the context of group thought and identity. This is of imperative importance to the topic I am analyzing. My goal, to prove the existence of Deaf Jews as an intersectionality in Holocaust studies and memory, relies almost entirely on Halbwachs' point. My thesis must prove that the individuals I study had a unique experience and collective memory because they belonged not just to the "Deaf group," or the "Jewish group," but both.

It is also important to note that Wachtel includes further analysis of this topic by Roger Bastide. Bastide supports Halbwachs' overall concept of social thought and collective memory, but challenges the idea that memory is solely defined by group affiliation.[19] Instead, Bastide posits that "'it is the structure of the group that provides the frameworks of the collective memory, which is no longer defined as a collective consciousness but rather as a system of interrelating individual memories.'"[20] This again, supports Halbwachs' overall theory, but places more significance on the individual. This is of importance to my topic as it highlights the importance of individual testimony, which is a prime focus of my research.

The theories Wachtel describes are clearly present in Peter Novick's analysis of Holocaust memory in the United States in his work: *The Holocaust in American Life*. This piece does not limit itself solely to the Holocaust Museum and instead illustrates how the collective memory of the Holocaust in America evolved. Novick describes the Holocaust's rise from

[17] Wachtel, 211.
[18] Wachtel, 212.
[19] Wachtel, 215.
[20] Wachtel, 215.

obscurity to the almost inappropriate significance it holds today; in the minds of a nation in which it did not occur, and holds a population that is less than three percent Jewish.

American understanding, awareness, and value of the Holocaust evolved slowly over several decades between the 1940s and the present day. Novick traces this progression starting in the war years, when "there were no first hand reports from Western journalists."[21] By 1945, the American public was besieged with images of the liberation, making it impossible for them to "avoid acknowledging - the reality of the Holocaust."[22] However, what the Americans believed they were seeing was treatment of "in the main… …political opponents of the Third Reich," not a targeted extermination of select groups of people.[23] Through the 50s "the Holocaust wasn't talked about very much in the United States;" which Novick credits to the Jewish desire to disassociate from the communists. Conversely, this changes through the 60s and 70s due to the Eichmann Trial, the conflict over Israel and many other influences.[24] By the end of the 70s the Holocaust had become "not just a Jewish memory but an American memory,"[25] with a great deal of credit to the NBC miniseries: *Holocaust*.[26] From the end of the 70s to the current day, the Holocaust has been prominent in American consciousness, primarily due to the Jewish embrace of victim status, and rise of an American Jewish leadership desire to fight for Israel.

At this point memory of the Holocaust had deviated from its strict Jewish only persecution to include other groups, causing deep conflict in the historical and Holocaust focused

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[21] Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999), 22.
[22] Novick, 63.
[23] Novick, 64.
[24] Novick, 128.
[25] Novick, 208.
[26] Novick, 209.

community. These issues came to a head with President Carter's announcement that a memorial would be created to the "'six million,'" which was almost immediately followed by pushes for representation of the "'eleven million:'" a fictional figure said to represent all victims of the Holocaust[27]. From the onset of this announcement, its seems, the conflict of inclusion took over awareness of the Holocaust in America. Who to include and why? Also initiating a hierarchy of victimhood, as it pushed some groups to claim they had been more greatly victimized by others.

Inclusion is a concern of every museum; however, Novick is able to illustrate the intensity of the controversy on inclusion in considering the Holocaust, and especially in designing the museum. At the onset of the piece Novick defines a Holocaust survivor: "the term 'Holocaust survivor,' in recent American usage, has a very explicit meaning: it always, or almost always, refers to a Jewish survivor of the Nazi murder program."[28] However, the Jews were very obviously not the only group affected by the Holocaust; however, they were indeed the main focus of Hitler's "Final Solution". Therein lies the problem: how to represent the total without ignoring the very different ways groups were targeted, or vice versa, how to make sure every group is represented without making each persecution seem uniform.

Controversy over what to include in the memorial promised by Carter began immediately on the President's Commission for the Holocaust.[29] A push for inclusion of Catholics, Ukrainians, and Poles prompted Carter to use the eleven million figure; this "redefinition was, of course, deeply offensive to Wiesel," the chairman of the committee. While Wiesel did acknowledge the victimization of other groups he alluded that "they were not victims of the 'Holocaust,'" returning to Novick's original definition. Wiesel's definition seemed to "'create a

[27] Novick, 216-217.
[28] Novick, 67.
[29] Novick, 217.

category of second-class victims,'" or, a hierarchy of victimhood.[30] The development of the museum seemed to focus solely on this controversy of inclusion, involving somewhat disproportional pushes for representation based on communities' levels of influence. For example, the gay community somehow instated a bloated figure of one million, while in reality at most 15,000 gays died at the hands of the Nazis. Meanwhile the Romani population, which was decimated in almost equal proportion to the Jews, has very little representation. Novick posits that these levels representation in Holocaust historiography are indicative of both groups social capital. [31] While the LGBT community holds a great deal of influence, especially in American society, the Romani population holds very, very little. This resulted in varied levels of representation, but a final product that makes no secret of its direct focus on the Jews.

Novick's piece is an incredible documentation of the rise of Holocaust memory in the Untied States, stripped of any sentiment or nostalgia. Unlike other authors, Novick starkly analyzes the reality of the disproportionate prominence of this event in American life. Though my research does not focus on this prominence, Novick's research provides context for the actual development of the Holocaust Museum, and the real motives behind it. This assists my research by providing me with information about the motivations behind the creation of museums, and how said creation is defended. In addition, Novick's wealth of information about the complexities of inclusion that surround creating an exhibit of memory are invaluable. Not only do these inform my research of the context for inclusion that already exists in the museum, but also brings my attention to controversy that could surround my own work. For example, my examination of Deaf Jews begs the question: why only this disabled group? Or by that logic,

[30] Novick, 218.
[31] Novick, 223.

why not all those labeled as antisocial? To successfully create my work I must be able to defend the decision to examine such a small group, whom I have included, and whom I have excluded.

The controversy of representation is also a feature of Edward Linenthal's piece: *Preserving Memory: the Struggle to Create America's Holocaust Museum*. Unlike Novick, Linenthal seems to celebrate, more than criticize, the creation of the museum. In addition, Linenthal work is solely is an expansive narrative and analysis of how the Holocaust Museum evolved from an idea to a reality, not an overall analysis of the Holocaust in America. The book describes the conflicts directly between individuals, but also over specific challenges of how, what, why, who and where. Linenthal describes this as the boundaries of memory; not only boundaries of what should be incorporated in the museum but also how memory can be communicated through a museum.

The boundaries of memory was not simply a concept Linenthal came up with while analyzing the museum; it was a consideration at the forefront of the museum's development by its designers. Linenthal outlines their choices in what "faces and artifacts" to include, the "boundaries of horror," "representation of the perpetrators," and representation of artifacts in context.[32]

In his description of "faces and artifacts" Linenthal makes the reader consider how the curators did not simply throw together photos they had found, but meticulously chose them to communicate a certain message. Through this curation visitors are able to view images ranging from faces of "agony, sullen anger and despair," to images "taken by the murderers, which focus on the suffering of emaciated bodies," to photographs by a Konvo ghetto resident which were

[32] Edward T. Linenthal, *Preserving Memory: the Struggle to Create America's Holocaust Museum* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), xiv.

"able to convey a gentle and loving glimpse of a doomed people."[33] This range is incredibly powerful as it is able to communicate the many different lenses the Holocaust was seen through, as well as a great deal of the range of emotion, or lack there of, that existed during this time.

Important as well is Linenthal's discussion of the boundaries of horror. One difficulty of creating an exhibition of any horrific event or material, is overcoming the dissonance between the intense knowledge of the experts designing the exhibition and the inexperience of the viewers. This relationship is explained well by Ray Farr's realization that "the design team 'had to make the exhibit accessible even to those who cannot deal with images [they have] had to learn how to deal with, day in and day out."[34] While the expert may desire to communicate the true horror they have discovered, this may simply be unbearable for the novice viewer. If individuals who do not have great exposure to the subject are unable to view the exhibit due to its extreme nature, the exhibition is essentially rendered useless, as the object of an exhibition is presumably to educate the uneducated. The committees became aware that they had to "find an appropriate balance between representation of life and death," and whether "nudity would be appropriate given proper context and interpretation." To this end it was also decided that "visitors should be 'prepared'" for what they were to see. [35] Such preparation and censorship may seem excessive, to the point that it would put "the museum in danger of not fulfilling its mission".[36] However, Linenthal's work clearly illustrates the need for this consideration. He not only explains how the designers made these choices, but why they had to, in order to ensure the success of the museum.

[33] Linenthal, 174.
[34] Linenthal, 194.
[35] Linenthal, 196.
[36] Linenthal, 198.

Representation of the perpetrators requires equal thought and care. Most obviously the museum had to avoid creating "'an environment where people were being reverent in front of the wrong things.'"[37] This concern naturally limited the display of Nazi memorabilia, but also inspired creative decisions like obscuring a large Nazi flag with photographs of other aspects of the "police state".[38] Curbing features of Nazi artifacts is an obvious solution to this concern; less obvious is how to visually represent the individual perpetrators themselves. A complete absence of the perpetrators could have made it seem as if "'there was this metaphysical evil that mysteriously killed the Jews;"[39] but, "'showing the faces high up, as portraits, might seem to memorialize these mass murderers.'" The curators found a middle ground by displaying the "'perpetrators often enjoying their work" in images and providing "evidence throughout in text, photographs and artifacts." [40] Through these methods the museum was able to prove the existence of the perpetrators and their power without memorializing or appearing to celebrate them.

Finally necessary to consider is the representation of artifacts in context. An excerpt of oral testimony of a survivor, presented at the end of the museum, is a perfect explanation of why the representation of artifacts is so important. The woman asks one thing of the visitors: "whether it's a little shoe, or a letter or a torn prayer book, remember that these were our precious, precious valuables."[41] Without context, artifacts presented in the museum can be trivialized, completely separated from those they were connected with. This is a concern

[37] Linenthal, 199.
[38] Linenthal, 200.
[39] Linenthal, 201.
[40] Linenthal, 203.
[41] Diana J. Schemo, "Museum Opens With Firm Grip On the Emotions," *The New York Times* (New York, NY), Apr. 27, 1993. http://www.nytimes.com/1993/04/27/us/museum-opens-with-firm-grip-on-the-emotions.html

expressed by many on the display of the shoes and other personal objects. Even more hotly debated was the potential display the Nazi collected, forcibly shorn, hair. After incredible debate, and even a vote supporting the display, the "privileged voice of the survivor, won out," and a photograph replaced the physical presentation.[42] The concerns about displaying actual human remains were obvious. Visitor reaction and the sanctity of the remains were two of the most intensely debated discussion points. However, alongside of both was the concern of how to present the context: would the display include images of shorn women or bags ready for delivery? While this could have been done with the display of the actual hair, there was great concern that the presence of the real artifact would overshadow the context presented and eliminate the message.

Linenthal's text deals with the issues specifically in the context of the United States Holocaust Museum; however, they are overall concerns that arise with the design of any exhibit. To expand on this initial foray into the minefield that is museum curation and representation I turned to highest American authority on museums, the Smithsonian. *Exhibiting Dilemmas* is a collection of accounts about the creation of several controversial Smithsonian exhibits, edited by Amy Henderson and Adrienne L. Kaeppler. The title of the text itself is enough to explain its significance to my research. Upon further examination of the book, I found it not only relevant, but also extremely helpful. Kaeppler and Henderson first aid my research by simply outlining a few of the most prominent issues that come with exhibiting history.

The text is divided into two sections, the first "'Dilemmas of Representation,'" and the second "'Dilemmas of Curatorship."[43] Despite this rigid split, it seemed to me that almost all of

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[42]Linenthal 216

[43] Amy Henderson and Adrienne L. Kaeppler, *Exhibiting Dilemmas* (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian, 1997), 4.

the accounts could fit under either section, and all shared themes dealing with issues that could be qualified as curatorship or representation. Some of the issues presented are more abstract, like: "how to convey past and current views of culture and history, how collections have influenced research and exhibition strategies, how to deal with current problems of stereotyping, and how to achieve curatorial balance."[44] In addition to these conceptual problems, are more concrete ones; for example, displaying property, repatriation of objects, and context.

All of these themes echo those covered in Linenthal's *Preserving Memory: the Struggle to Create America's Holocaust Museum*, providing further proof of this text's relevance. Also echoed are the themes of social thought and collective memory presented in the Wachtel piece. This is particularly prominent in the "Curating the Recent Past" passage by William Yeingst and Lonnie G. Bunch. Yeingst and Bunch even repeat Wachtel's in their statement on the "ascendancy of the 'new social history' with its focus on history 'from the bottom up' and its desire to give voice to those who were traditionally outside the narratives of history."[45] *Exhibiting Dilemmas* is able to relate this new push for social history, to actual exhibit design and education.

One author included in this collection, Steven Lubar, identifies that "historians want to use archives and objects, the public more often turns to memory, personal connections and family stories."[46] This thought begs the question of how these two views can be reconciled to create a successful exhibit for both historians and the public. Yeingst and Bunch delve further into this issue to ask many questions, including: "how do museums negotiate the tension between academic history and popular memory" and "who has the authority to interpret the past to the

[44] Henderson and Kaeppler, 8.
[45] Henderson and Kaeppler, 144.
[46] Henderson and Kaeppler, 16.

public, and what are the limits of that authority?"[47] These authors also describe how exhibition of the recent past is not only shaped by, but also often driven by, social history.[48] Besides the important analysis of how to balance social and classical history, especially in regards to presentation to the public, are important examples of specific cases regarding property, representation. These cases allow my research to be informed about what possible conflicts could arise in such situations, and how they could potentially be resolved.

Last, but surely not least, in my exploration of associated literature, I had to examine sources specifically related to the content I would be using. I began with *Crying Hands: Eugenics and Deaf People in Nazi Germany*, by Horst Biesold. Simply reading the title makes it clear that the focus of this book is on treatment of the Deaf during the Holocaust, not specifically Deaf Jews. However, treatment of the Deaf provides important context for the treatment of the intersectionality I am investigating. Biesold gives a comprehensive account of the different ways the Deaf experienced Hitler's regime; he is able to illustrate the rise of anti-disabled sentiment, to the active practice of "racial hygiene," and the ways it affected the Deaf community. Furthermore, Biesold actually devotes an entire chapter of his book to the topic of Deaf Jews.

I was thoroughly impressed with this source for many reasons, but primarily for its specific focus on the Deaf. As Deaf people are part of the disabled population, their specific experience of the Holocaust is often left unstudied. When historians examine the Holocaust they tend to focus on the plight of the disabled overall; this unfortunately makes the assumption that the experience of every one of the extremely diverse, disabled populations was the same. Though Biesold himself is not Deaf, he became motivated to study this subject after, "twelve years of living and working with deaf people," and "a two-year preparatory program in deaf

[47] Henderson and Kaeppler, 145.
[48] Henderson and Kaeppler, 150.

education."[49] Biesold mentions this long involvement with the Deaf community to illustrate how strange it was that he had never encountered information about the Deaf experience under the Nazis and particularly, the Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases of 1933. Biesold's eyes were opened by a dear friend's personal account; this made him aware, not only of the deep scar this period left on Germany's Deaf population, but also the incredible shame and secrecy that surround it.[50] It was also through this account that Biesold became aware of the complicity of his predecessors.

Most likely because of his position as an educator of the Deaf, Biesold puts a great deal of emphasis on the complicity of teachers of the Deaf during the Nazi regime. It is important to note the deep involvement teachers of the Deaf had in the overall effort to curb the Deaf population. Institutions for the education of the Deaf were the primary mechanism through which Deaf youth were identified, sterilized, and sometimes euthanized. Biesold utilizes scores of data to prove this fact in his lengthy chapter on "Teacher-Collaborators."[51] To put the teachers' betrayal of their students in context, Biesold first establishes the German view of disability at the time.

The text begins with a concise explanation of how the concept of social Darwinism manifested itself in the Nazi regime. Naturally the Nazi pursuit for the perfect German race did not include the disabled; however, while the Jews and Roma people were widely considered a menace to society, it seems that the disabled were seen simply as inferior and an economic drain. It is this aspect of the disabled population, its cost to society, that caused the rise of eugenics in the Nazi administration. Biesold outlines how "economic efficiency was the ultimate goal of

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[49] Horst Biesold, *Crying Hands* (Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press, 1999), xi.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Biesold, 42.

German eugenicists, who believed that the 'social burden' created by people with disabilities could be decreased through racial hygiene," a term coined by German doctor, Alfred Plotz.[52] To accomplish this goal Germany looked towards active eugenic policies in the United States, where compulsory sterilization bills had been passed in North Dakota, South Dakota, and California.[53]

To end hereditary deafness and other disorders, eugenicists first attempted to prove that it existed, through many studies and family history questionnaires. With limited proof of this correlation, the Nazis passed the Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary diseases in 1933.[54] This law made legal the sterilization of, by some accounts, "more than 15,000 congenitally deaf persons."[55] The scarcity of written records on this topic leads Biesold to "a biographical approach that would interweave oral history data with other documentation."[56] Biesold disseminated questionnaires to the Deaf affected by the law primarily through advertisements in Deaf publications. He was able to collect data from 1, 215 Deaf individuals who were willing to confirm that they were sterilized.[57] However, he makes sure to acknowledge that this is most likely a minimized figure as Deaf people were not only scared to report their sterilizations, but also ashamed.

This effect of fear and shame on reporting is even more evident in the reporting of forced abortions. Physicians were given legal authority to terminate pregnancies of disabled mothers with the Law to Amend the Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases, which

[52] Biesold, 14 and 15.
[53] Biesold, 15.
[54] Biesold, 16 and 17. It is important to note that sterilization of the disabled against their will was already occurring years before 1933. One specific case is that of Gustav Boeters who urged the government to support and encourage the sterilization he, and others, were already carrying out, "we in Zwickau have undertaken sterilization operations on mental defectives and others." This quote was taken from a letter to government officials December 3, 1923.
[55] Biesold, 36.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Biesold, 40.

was "promulgated in the *Reich Law Gazette* on June 27, 1935."[58] 662 Deaf women reported to Biesold that they had been sterilized against their will, of that number, 57 reported that they had also had their pregnancy terminated against their will.[59] Thirteen of these women reported that this occurred in their third trimester, seven in the ninth month of their pregnancy.[60] Considering the limited number of Deaf individuals that reported their sterilizations, compared to the estimate, it is not hard to believe that more than 57 fetuses were aborted against the will of their Deaf mothers.

Finally, the Nazi regime also used euthanasia as a method of reducing the Deaf population. As stated before, the Deaf were not considered "'racially intact' or 'hereditarily fit'" for the Nazi dream for German society.[61] While efforts to reduce the disabled population were initially conducted primarily through sterilization, the German government began exploring methods to end life "'unworthy of life'" under its rule.[62] First the disabled were transferred to facilities where "'mortality [would] naturally be substantially greater.'"[63] When this failed to be satisfactorily efficient, certain groups were selected for euthanasia. This was conducted initially through reports of "'monstrous births,'" requiring doctors to inform the government of the birth of disabled babies, and even the existence of disabled young children.[64] Identified children were committed to "twenty-one 'children's wards,'" in which children "up to the age of seventeen,

[58] Biesold, 201.
[59] Biesold, 84.
[60] Biesold, 85.
[61] Biesold, 160.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Biesold, 161.
[64] Biesold, 162.

were killed by injections of morphium-hydocholral or luminal, or by starvation."[65] To target the adult population the Nazis implemented the well-known T4 program in 1939.

The murder of Deaf children and adults is important to acknowledge not only because it is indicative about how the Deaf were viewed by the Nazis, but also because it demonstrates how treatment of the disabled led to the efforts to exterminate Jewish and Roma people. Biesold strives to prove this in the last chapter of his book. I do not find it necessary to analyze this argument at great length, as its validity is clear to anyone who has studied the rise of Fascism in Germany, and the steps leading towards the Holocaust. However, I believe it is important to highlight a few actions that prove Biesold's point.

Firstly, the 'children's wards' euthanasia program was extended to Jewish and Roma children with no diagnosis after 1943.[66] Second, and even more damning, is the fact that the T4 program began employing "gas chambers disguised as shower rooms" in its euthanasia efforts.[67] This not only indicates that efforts to eliminate the disabled population were directly related to efforts against the Jewish and Roma populations, but also highlights the intensity of persecution of the disabled. Aktion 14 F 13 was implemented under Heinrich Himmler to directly target the disabled in concentration camps for immediate elimination. In fact, Buchenwald commander, Koch, was told directly by Himmler that: "'all the feebleminded and crippled inmates are to be killed.'"[68] It is important to note this direct targeting because it indicates how worthless the disabled population was to the Nazi regime, and how Deaf Jews would have faced a more immediate threat of death than those individuals who were just Jewish.

[65] Biesold, 162 and 163.
[66] Biesold, 163.
[67] Biesold, 163.
[68] Biesold, 164.

This source succinctly outlines the Deaf experience of the Nazi regime, and establishes a clear context for the experience of Deaf Jews. Furthermore, the text includes a chapter devoted specifically to the Deaf Jewish community in Germany during the early 20th Century, before it was effectively destroyed under Hitler's rule. Much of this chapter is devoted to a brief history of the Israelite Institution for the Deaf of Germany, established in 1873 by a Jewish man named Markus Reich.[69] According to Kurt Lietz, in his article "The Place of the School of the Deaf in the New Reich," this was one of four Deaf Jewish schools in existence during the early 20th century. Though the school was small "approximately one thousand deaf German Jews attended" it in total, before it was shut down under Nazi rule.[70] After the death of Markus Reich, his son, Felix Reich took over as director. During his time as director, the school reached its maximum enrollment in 1931, with 59 students in attendance.[71] The success of the institution actually pushed "the Prussian state to open the first German secondary school for deaf students."[72] Biesold writes on many incredible accomplishments of the school, and makes it clear that it was not only a benefit for the students who attended it, but the German Deaf and German Jewish communities as a whole.

Unfortunately this is not where the story ends. As members of not only one, but two groups unwelcome in the New Reich, "Jewish deaf people were the first group to be delivered to a power apparatus specifically created for their extermination."[73] Biesold identifies that this did not begin at the hands of Nazi officials. Instead, the Deaf Jews "suffered harassment,

[69] Biesold, 131.
[70] Biesold, 130.
[71] Biesold, 133.
[72] Biesold, 134.
[73] Ibid.

denunciation, curses and persecution… …from their fellow deaf, the Nazi deaf."[74] As the Nazi party rose to power, and German society began to reject the Jews, the Deaf German community followed suit. German Deaf organizations were specifically instructed to end memberships of Deaf Jews. For example, "33 deaf Jews were expelled from the General Association for Support of the Deaf," even one woman who had been a member for 57 years."[75] Rejection from German Deaf society and organizations naturally fostered the development of Deaf Jewish organizations and strengthened the bonds of the Deaf Jewish community. Biesold lists several examples of such occurrences.

Soon Deaf Jews became the target of hearing Nazi bureaucracy with the Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases. As sterilization does not comply with Jewish religious beliefs, the Deaf Jews were encouraged by their religious communities to reject this mandate; as a result some were forcibly sterilized.[76] As persecution of both the Deaf and the Jews began to increase many attempted to leave Germany. By 1939 many students and teachers had left the Israelite Institution for the Deaf of Germany. In spite of this Felix Reich had continued to run the school, but by August of that year he made the decision to "get eight of his youngest students to safety in London." Soon after they arrived in London Germany attacked Poland, and as a new immigrant to England and a former German soldier (WWI), Reich was detained as a suspected spy.[77] This prevented Reich from returning to save more of his students as he planned. Double status as both Deaf and Jewish made the chance of survival for these students very slim.

[74] Ibid.
[75] Biesold, 136.
[76] Biesold, 137.
[77] Ibid.

Reich's school, most of the focuses in *Crying Hands*, and even actual chapters taken from the book, are included in *Deaf People in Hitler's Europe*. Unlike *Crying Hands*, *Deaf People in Hitler's Europe* is a collection of pieces by several scholars, including Biesold, on the topic. The work was inspired by a 1998 Conference at Gallaudet University of the same title.[78] John Schuchman and Donna F. Ryan began examining this subject in 1993 and quickly realized that communication between Holocaust historians and historians of the Deaf was almost non-existent. Ryan states that the 1998 conference was an effort to "bring these two worlds together to encourage an exchange of information and collaboration.[79] Consequently the conference was practically the first instance of collaboration on this topic, and allowed several different experts to integrate their work.

Deaf People in Hitler's Europe is intended to be a further synthesis; however, it seems to be primarily a collection of very separate works on similar topics, specifically "Racial Hygiene", "The German Experience", and "The Jewish Deaf Experience."[80] The only aspect of the collection that works to allow the sources to communicate with each other is the inclusion of introductions before each section. A complete examination of the first two sources is unnecessary for this review as Horst Biesold in *Crying Hands* covers the majority of the subject matter they contain. My decision to leave this analysis out is supported by the editors themselves, as Ryan states in her preface that *Crying Hands* "is the most authoritative work on

[78] Donna F. Ryan and John S. Schuchman, eds., *Deaf People in Hitler's Europe* (Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press in Association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2002), vii.
[79] Ryan and Schuchman, viii.
[80] Ryan and Schuchman, v.

the subject to date."[81] This establishes that even the few other primary experts on this topic defer to Biesold as the greatest source of information at this time.

The only exception is a chapter by John Schuchman: "Misjudged People: The German Deaf community in 1932."[82] Though Biesold does indeed write on this topic, the analysis in *Deaf People in Hitler's Europe* creates a clear picture of Deaf German culture, as portrayed by the 1932 film *Verkannte Menschen* or, *Misjudged People*. In *Crying Hands* this work is referenced as evidence of Deaf German collaboration, but Schuchman utilizes the source to illustrate what Deaf German culture was like before it was effectively destroyed. This is important because it, first, establishes that there was a thriving Deaf community in Germany before it was deemed unfit for German society.

Verkannte Menschen was a film created by the REGEDE, the national Deaf association referenced in an entire chapter of *Crying Hands.* Existence of this society, and film, prove a little known fact; that much of the Deaf community in Germany was actually in great support of the Nazi party. *Misjudged People* is not an anti-Nazi film, but an anti-eugenics one. At the onset of the 20th Century the eugenics movement was rising on an international level. It was strengthened by the worldwide economic decline following WWI which "resulted in devastating unemployment for deaf persons everywhere."[83] However, this hardship actually inspired the creation of new Deaf organizations and international Deaf collaboration.[84] During the Weimar Republic Deaf education was made mandatory and Deaf people began to seriously organize within their own community. Schuchman highlights that "the most active effort took place in the

[81] Ryan and Schuchman, viii.
[82] Ryan and Schuchman, v.
[83] Ryan and Schuchman, 99.
[84] Ibid. One impressive example is the 1935 international "Deaf Artists" exhibition, in New York City.

international sports arena."[85] Germany was very active and successful in the world of Deaf sports, this devotion to sports would later encourage the development of the Deaf Jewish sports teams cited by Biesold once the Jews were ousted from Deaf German organizations. Though this progress had occurred, the German population as a whole was unaware of its flourishing Deaf community.

To combat this ignorance REGEDE followed the Nazi example and created its own propaganda film. In this case the goal was not to create support for the Nazi party, but instead to educate the public about the merits of the Deaf Community, and Deaf people themselves. It appears that a primary goal of the film was to communicate how easily Deaf children could be integrated into Hearing society as a result of the new Deaf education policy.[86] The film contrasts "the 'old days' in which deaf characters used gesture to indicate that they could not hear and were dependent upon charity for food and assistance," with the new, oral educated, Deaf population which was able communicate through speech and read lips.[87] Independence, utility, and societal contribution was the clear focus of the film, proving that even adults who could not speak were able to drive, hold jobs, and even appreciate public speeches with the use of interpreters.[88] In a stark departure from Nazi doctrine the film cited data to disprove the eugenics theory of hereditary deafness, chiefly the fact that "only 10 percent of deaf people had deaf parents."[89] This was another main point of the film. Unfortunately, this information did nothing

[85] Ibid.
[86] Ryan and Schuchman, 101.
[87] Ibid. Oral education of the Deaf utilizes speech as the primary form of communication and sometimes eliminates the use of sign language completely.
[88] Ryan and Schuchman, 103. In many nations it was very difficult for the Deaf to obtain driver's licenses so this is an important point in proving that the Deaf could function in hearing Nazi society.
[89] Ryan and Schuchman, 108.

to stem the Nazi effort to eliminate the Deaf population. In fact, the Nazi Ministry did not even allow the film to be shown.[90]

This material, though informative, is again relegated to the topic of Deaf people in the Holocaust, not specifically outlining experiences of Deaf Jews. Biesold is able to relate description of the German Deaf community to exclusion of Deaf Jews more successfully in his work; however, Schuchman and Ryan have a far greater focus on Deaf Jews in their text overall. As previously stated, it is this last section that truly distinguishes *Deaf People in Hitler's Europe* from *Crying Hands.* An entire third of the book is dedicated to the experience of Deaf Jews. Testimony and testimony analysis are the basis of most of this text, as the authors encountered the same lack of records on Deaf Jews that I had.

Unlike my research, the testimony these researchers collected and analyzed was solely from Hungarian Deaf Jews. Because Ryan and Schuchman actually conducted these interviews, and the interviewees were all students of the same Deaf Jewish school, the stories similar enough to weave together. Unfortunately the success of this effort was limited, as the authors shifted from subject to subject with no clear timeline or transitions. Despite this deficiency, each of the testimonies was enlightening in its own way, and helped to verify the themes I had identified to support Deaf Jews as an intersectionality. For example, the resourcefulness of Izráel Deutsch who took off his yellow star to buy wares and sell them for profit in the IRC camp he resided in.[91] Another example is the dual persecution Klara Edrosi faced. Edrosi suffered the forced labor of her fellow Jews; however, she "was the only prisoner assigned to dig graves continuously," as the guards did not believe her capable of other tasks.[92] Ryan and Schuchman

[90] Ryan and Schuchman, 110.
[91] Ryan and Schuchman, 180.
[92] Ryan and Schuchman, 189. Edrosi dug fifty-seven graves over only a few months.

were able to use these unique testimonies to supplement the absence of records on Deaf Jews in Hungary, and create a body of work on their experience.

In their introduction, the authors identify why this difficult but also incredibly important to do. Ryan and Schuchman both explain that they chose to focus on Hungarian Deaf Jews because, as Hungary was one of the last nations to begin transporting Jews to death camps, Hungarians often had a greater chance of survival.[93] This is not as important when examining the multitude of survivors overall, but when specifying an already miniscule population, who's chances of survival were already limited, it is a logical choice. The authors also both concur on the fact that Deaf Jews had an experience unique from both the Deaf and the Jews. Ryan states that, "they were persecuted because they were Jews, but their experiences were also shaped by their deafness."[94] Schuchman not only shares this sentiment, but also identifies that Holocaust studies tends to gloss over not only the Deaf experience, but the Deaf Jewish experience as well. He acknowledges the difficulty of studying these small populations but asserts: "nevertheless, deaf people were a part of the Holocaust and recording their experiences is important."[95] This is an imperative point to be made in order to justify the study of this subject. Fortunately for Schuchman, myself, and any other historian writing on this topic, a study was conducted to support this very argument.

The study in question was conducted by Patricia Durr and reported in her article "Visual Histories: Recording, Preserving and Disseminating and Analyzing Deaf Stories." Durr clearly states that the purpose of her is piece: "to promote the importance of visual testimonies for Deaf

[93] Ryan and Schuchman, 170.
[94] Ryan and Schuchman, 168.
[95] Ryan and Schuchman, 169.

cultural studies programs."[96] Promoting this is necessary, according to Durr, because Deaf visual testimonies are primarily utilized to analyze sign language linguistics and not "historical, social and political understandings."[97] Not only does Durr emphasize the importance of using Deaf testimony for historical analysis, she also uses Deaf Holocaust survivor testimony to make this point. This reinforces not only the idea that Deaf perspectives should be analyzed, but that the experience of the Deaf and Deaf Jews should be included in the study of the Holocaust.

Durr validates her point through a qualitative study; which assessed "the impact of Deaf related testimonies of survivors of the Holocaust on NTID Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing students."[98] With the help of ethnographic researcher Dr. Susan Foster, Durr devised five open-ended questions for students to answer based on their reactions to visual testimony of primarily Deaf survivors.[99] These questions probed the students on "the feelings they experienced… …what they learned, what surprised them, if they thought the deaf and hearing people experienced the Shoah differently," and if they "felt differently when watching deaf survivors versus hearing survivors."[100] Student responses to all of the questions helped to form an understanding of how individuals react to Deaf survivor testimony; however, the responses to the three last questions seemed to be the greatest contribution Durr's argument.

The first of these three questions asked the students if they had found anything surprising. This is important because it reveals how little even the Deaf students knew about the experiences of Deaf people in the Holocaust. Some examples of unawareness include: the fact that Deaf people were forcibly sterilized, "that Nazis had been bad to Deaf people too (not just Jewish

[96] Durr, 517.
[97] Ibid. This assertion was made in 2008, it is possible that utilization of Deaf visual testimony for non linguistic analysis has increased since.
[98] Durr, 533.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.

people)," that Deaf people who escaped Europe were often denied entrance to the United States, and finally surprise at "how realistic the Deaf testimonies made the Holocaust for students."[101] Representation is a constant theme of Holocaust studies, and in this case, the serious lack of representation of Deaf people in the Holocaust clearly ensured that even Deaf individuals were uninformed of this persecution.

Next the students were asked if they believed that the way Deaf and Hearing people experienced the Holocaust was different. Many students responded that they did feel this way, particularly because of the confusion Deaf people suffered. Students cited the fact that individuals had to "refrain from using sign language," and that not hearing directions from a soldier could cost a Deaf person their life.[102] Durr observed that the responses indicate that the students "developed empathy and sympathy for the plight of their deaf ancestors."[103] While it is also possible for Deaf individuals to feel sympathetic about Hearing testimony, the responses to Durr's last question illustrate why viewing Deaf testimony allows for the development of more intense empathy.

Two out of twenty-two students surveyed reported that they did not feel differently when watching Deaf testimony, as opposed to Hearing testimony.[104] All of the other students indicated that they did feel differently. After analyzing the responses, Durr concluded that most students credited this feeling to the difference in "language delivery, facial expression[,] personal relevancy and the ability to put one's self in the interviewee's shoes."[105] One student exemplifies these themes in their response: "I instantly felt closer to them and understood how they felt about

[101] Ibid.
[102] Durr, 537.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Durr, 538.

their experiences by looking at their face expressions and emotions on their faces. I was able to relate with them more because they are deaf like me and understood them better."[106] Another cites the increased ability to actually understand another Deaf person, as opposed to a Hearing person: "I feel differently that deaf people can tell elaborately, exactly pattern. Hearing people do different way that they talk and I am lost what hearing people lecturing."[107] This response is particularly revealing as it not only states that Hearing and Deaf people communicate differently, but also displays that difference through the language used.

Each of these questions and their responses demonstrate the power of these Deaf visual testimonies. This supports Durr's assertion that Deaf visual testimony should be utilized to increase historical, social and political understanding of the Deaf community. It also helps to justify the research of Schuchman, Ryan, Biesold, and myself. Finally, it also validates and encourages future research on this subject and in the field of Deaf studies and visual testimony.

[106] Durr, 538.
[107] Ibid. Durr includes a note at the onset of this interview section: "In order to preserve the original authenticity of the respondents and not wanting to tamper with their responses, their statements have not been edited nor their English corrected" (533). As English is an auditory language it is less accessible for Deaf people. Some Deaf individuals are raised without great exposure to either sign language or an auditory language, and experience language deprivation that sometimes can be observed in their use of written languages as adults.

3) Research:

A) Summary of Testimonies and Research:

Most of my initial research was conducted in the US Holocaust Museum Archives, the museum's online database, and NTID's *Deaf People in World War II* website. The focus of this research was primarily to identify Deaf Jewish individuals and artifacts. Thankfully I was also able to draw from research like *Crying Hands* by Horst Biesold and *Deaf People in Hitler's Europe* by Donna F. Ryan and John Schuchman. However, as there are few bodies of work or records on the experience of the Deaf during the Holocaust, and even less on Deaf Jews, a great deal of my exhibition depends on existing testimony and records of individual Deaf Jews. First, utilizing *Deaf People in World War II* I was able to identify most of the survivors who recorded testimony, and a few who had not. After exhausting this source I was able to identify the existence of many more Deaf Jews whom had presumably perished during the Holocaust, or before they recorded testimony.

In total I was able to identify over 30 Deaf Jews who had recorded testimony, and a few additional testimonies by other survivors whose witnesses I found relevant. Though this figure may seem small, it is truly remarkable considering the small percentage of Jews in Europe whom were also Deaf, and vice-versa. Furthermore, the likelihood of survival for this group decreased by the fact that they faced persecution for their status as Jews, and Deaf. In addition, it is obvious that Deaf individuals face challenges in normal society, it is only logical that some of these challenges would become insurmountable in a society determined to eliminate them. As if this were not enough, sign languages are just as varied and diverse as spoken languages. Consequently, linguistic barriers decimated the probability that these individuals could have been identified and interviewed.

Including Deaf Jews who did record testimony, I was able to find record over 60 Deaf Jews whom experienced the Holocaust. This figure obviously does not encompass the entire Deaf Jewish population in Europe at the time Hitler came to power. Specifically, it unfortunately does not even include the names of every one of the Deaf Jewish students who attended one of the three Deaf Jewish schools that fell to Nazi control. Accordingly, this insufficiency is a clear opportunity for future research. Both of these lists are incorporated as tables in Appendix A.

B) Themes Derived from Background:

i. *Isolation:*

Isolation is often a theme that arises in a Deaf individual's life. For some it only occurs when they are in situations with no other Deaf people, as they are normally part of strong Deaf communities. For others it is an ever-present sense of longing for a community they have never known. Though these individuals have never experienced what life would be like with other Deaf people, they still feel this absence, even if they cannot identify what exactly it is they are missing. I found this to be reminiscent of Roger Bastide's observations of African American slaves. Though they did not know exactly what they had lost in their forced transfer from Africa to the United States, they still had "a sense of loss, and an inkling of what is missing."[108]

Though language barriers between prisoners in the camps would likely have caused many to feel isolated, this theme is unique to Deaf Jews as it is something they felt their whole lives, not just after displacement by the Nazis. Feelings of isolation were often amplified by this displacement and separation from a former Deaf community. This

[108] Wachtel, 215 and 216.

amplification did not immediately end upon flight or liberation from Nazi control; however, as many Deaf and Deaf Jewish communities were destroyed forever, and displaced peoples had to search for new communities where they settled.

ii. *Communication:*

Closely linked to isolation, is communication. This is another obvious theme in the lives of most Deaf people. While Deaf people are capable of learning many languages, just like hearing people, their inability to hear often prevents them from easily communicating with people using the spoken word. There are many ways to overcome this obstacle and communicate successfully. However, this becomes much more difficult when others are not willing to cooperate, and almost impossible when revealing deafness is not an option. As covered in the literature review, being identified as Deaf almost certainly resulted in sterilization and resulted in almost certain death in the camps. As sign language is a visible communication system, and often a sure indication that an individual is Deaf, use of sign language could result in death. Consequently, communication for the Deaf under Nazi rule was not just difficult, but something their mortality hinged on.

In addition, the Deaf experience with communication is very different from the hearing experience, because not all Deaf people are given the opportunity to learn sign language. Many of the survivors recount early lives without sign language, struggling to understand the world around them and the people in it, through languages they would never be able to easily comprehend. This makes the theme of communication distinct in the Deaf experience, and therefore the Deaf Jewish experience.

iii. *Dual Persecution:*

This is perhaps the most important theme used to prove my thesis. To prove that Deaf Jews are in fact an important intersectionality to examine in the field of Holocaust studies, I must prove that their experience was unique to other groups, especially the two groups they are members of. One of the most important aspects of this proof is that Deaf Jews experienced persecution in a way that neither the Deaf, nor the Jews did. To this end I have identified the theme of "Dual Persecution." As the Nazis did not have a specific category for Deaf Jews, or specific trials for them to endure, I have identified the ways being persecuted under both statuses created even more extreme oppression.

There are several examples of this in survivor testimony, as well as *Crying Hands* and *Deaf People in Hitler's Europe.* The latter text actually states that:

> being deaf and Jewish is not easy. The experience of many deaf Jews is one of marginalization. Within Judaism, deaf persons historically have been considered incomplete Jews, classified legally with children and mentally disabled individuals. Within the national deaf communities, deaf Jews have faced the same anti-Semitic attitudes prevalent in the hearing community at large.[109]

This statement outlines not only identifies the existence of dual persecution, but outlines the ways in which it generally occurred within each community. In the lens of Holocaust studies, the discrimination of Deaf Jews within each of these cultures commonly increased. Finally, there are several examples of discrimination of the each the Deaf, and the Jews, upon their arrival to new nations after fleeing the Holocaust. In particular, Deaf Jews found it incredibly hard to enter the United States, as the eugenics movement was prevalent there as well during this time, making the Deaf undesirable immigrants.

iv. *Resiliency and Hardihood:*

[109] Ryan and Schuchman, 169.

As stated above, Deaf Jews faced great adversity in their daily lives before living under an administration that wanted them gone. It is because of the trials that this group of people already had to face, that I include a theme of resiliency and hardihood. Though any individual who survived the Holocaust must be resilient, it is the way many of the Deaf Jews describe their experiences in such a matter of fact manner, that the viewer gets a striking impression of resiliency. The survivors all acknowledge what they endured were experiences of true horror. However, there is seldom a wallowing in this sorrow, instead their focus is on their gratitude and joy that they survived.

v. *Reliance on Others:*

vi. *Independence/Resourcefulness:*

These two themes go hand in hand. Frequently the Deaf Jews recount experiences in which they were forced to rely on others. These range from experiences before, after and during the Holocaust. As Deaf people were not deported to the camps, experience of reliance on others in the camps is a uniquely Deaf Jewish experience. It is not hard to imagine what ways a Deaf person would need to rely on others occasionally, especially in the camps, or how this reliance would make their experience unique to other groups. What is often hard for hearing people to imagine is the incredible independence of Deaf people, even in dire circumstances. This is why I included a theme of independence and resourcefulness.

vii. *Old Deaf/Deaf Jewish Community/Absence of:*

viii. *New Deaf/Deaf Jewish Community:*

These two themes are also intertwined, and mostly self-explanatory. I included each to illustrate individual experiences of the survivors, as well as the overall

communities they belonged to. I focus on Deaf communities instead of Jewish communities because Deaf Jews tended to form strong subgroups more commonly in Deaf communities than in Jewish communities. By that I mean that Deaf people, who were also Jewish, tended to connect easily in Deaf communities. Conversely, the small number of Jewish people who were Deaf may never have been able to find each other in the much larger Jewish community. This is not to mention the fact that it was very easy for Deaf Jews to communicate through Deaf circles, but much harder in Jewish ones.

ix. *Mode of Sharing Experiences:*

I included this final theme for several reasons. First, I wanted to acknowledge the many survivors who saw sharing their experiences as a cathartic experience. Several of the survivors simply state how relieved they felt after talking about what they had gone through. Others specify how powerful it was to share their stories with other Deaf Jews specifically, further solidifying this group as a community and intersectionality within Holocaust studies.

Second, I included it because of how difficult it was for some of the survivors to record testimony; this was not only because of the emotional hardship, which would have been enough of a trial. Instead, the greatest difficulty that appears in almost every single testimony is communication with the interviewer through the interpreter. Many of the interpreters do not understand what the interviewee is actually communicating and cause serious confusion between the interviewer and the interviewee. Often the interviewee is aware of the interpreters mistake, and some become visibly frustrated with the inadequacy.

Worse still are the several interviewers who do not seem to be at all familiar with Deaf people or Deaf culture. These interviewers often ask questions that insinuate astonishment at the Deaf individual's abilities, sometimes even verging outright rudeness. Another struggle interviewers seem to have is addressing the interviewee rather than the interpreter. In Yale University's interview of Meta N. the interpreter actually repeatedly instructs the interviewer to address Meta directly. I thought this was an important theme to include as facing condescension during their interview seems to be something more unique to the experience of Deaf survivors, and therefore Deaf Jewish survivors.

4) Exhibiting Research

A) Use of Themes in the Exhibit:

I chose to utilize the themes primarily in the displays of oral testimony. To do this I utilized an approach from the Bergen-Belsen Exhibition, and the original inspiration of my use of themes in testimony. In the exhibition there are a multitude of stations where one can view oral histories from survivors. However, this was not organized solely in the traditional manner of one individual's story alongside a short biography. Instead, the Bergen-Belsen staff had chosen to edit the testimony they owned, splicing short clips of different survivors speaking about the same topic together. This way the viewer was able to hear many different experiences of similar challenges, emotions, or, what one might call, themes.

My plan incorporates these miniature documentaries throughout the exhibit, where they fit into its chronology and subject. Some themes like mode of sharing experiences are relegated to a certain area, in this case, the last "Visitor Experience/Sharing Experiences" section. Others, like reliance on others, are featured in every section of chronology, as they are themes that exist throughout the lives and testimonies of the survivors. As I did not have access to the actual footage to edit, I transcribed quotations I would have selected for each theme. Examples of these breakdowns are included in *Appendix B.*

B) Summary of Design Document:

The final goal of my research was to create a design document for an exhibit that would prove my thesis; that, Deaf Jews were in fact their own intersectionality worth studying in the field of Holocaust research. What I have created is not a full design document, but the bare bones of one. I have outlined the overall floor plan, basic design of each room, what general research

would be included in each, and a few interactive aspects of the exhibit. To fully justify the design of the museum, I must first illustrate the process through which I produced it.

As previously stated, I was inspired to draw different themes from testimony to prove my thesis statement after viewing the display of testimony clips by theme in the Bergen-Belsen Exhibition. I had initially thought I would organize the exhibit to exactly replicate the thesis statement, broken down theme by theme. However, when first planning the exhibit I came to struggle with the balance between displaying evidence, proving my themes, and making an exhibit that a visitor would be able to understand. This was reminiscent to me of the challenge the Smithsonian museum staff faced that I cited earlier in the literature review, of how to reconcile the desires of the historian with the needs of the museumgoer.

First I attempted to reconcile these issues by organizing the themes in some sort of chronologic order, as can be seen in *Appendix C: Draft 1*. This was extremely difficult as many of the quotes I had identified applied to one theme, but different times in chronology. As I grew frustrated with this issue I was reminded again of the Smithsonian text, this time of the quote: "how do museums negotiate the tension between academic history and popular memory."[110] This led me to identify that in my own work the chronology represented the academic history and the themes the popular memory. I eventually settled on a chronologic order that would incorporate my themes in the exhibit, while working to prove them within my actual paper. This can be seen in the rough sketches in *Appendix C: Draft 2*.

Once I had established how that I would organize the exhibit chronologically, I had to determine how to incorporate the themes. The first draft of this attempt can be seen in *Appendix C: Draft 2*. To do this I combined some themes into one room, and divided others to keep the

[110] Henderson and Kaeppler, 145.

two-sided structure of the rooms. For example, I paired old Deaf community with independence and juxtaposed that with the combination of lack of Deaf community, reliance on others and isolation. These themes, though they sometimes appear later in chronology, can be primarily dedicated the period before the Third Reich. In addition, the chronologic structure of the exhibit does is not tied to exact dates, instead it refers more directly to the journeys of each individual. For example, if one individual escaped the Third Reich in 1932 their story would be featured in the "Final Trials," room along with an individual who escaped in 1942. As displayed in *Appendix C: Floor Plan*, the final floor plan includes these divisions of themes, as well as titles for each room.

As previously stated, I chose to divide the exhibit into rooms based on chronology. First comes a lobby, where visitors could be introduced to docents[111] and given the option of wearing white noise producing, noise cancelling headphones[112]. Next would come the "Racial Hygiene" room, which would educate the visitor on the persecution of the Deaf and the eugenics movement that motivated it. After this, the rooms would follow based strictly on a timeline: "Before the Third Reich", "Under the Nazi Flag", "Final Trials", and "After the End". Finally the last, more open space would be dedicated to melding the visitor experiences with the survivors' experiences in telling their stories. I wanted to include the survivor experience, not only because of the difficulty some had, but because of the cathartic feelings many experienced after sharing their stories. The addition of visitors' feedback was inspired by the World War II exhibit referenced Steven Lubar's chapter of *Exhibiting Dilemmas.* This exhibit included quotes

[111] In my ideal exhibit, all of these docents would be fluent in American Sign Language.
[112] These headphones would be an optional way for the visitor to try to immerse themselves in the Deaf Jewish experience, by temporarily limiting their own ability to hear.

from visitors stating how the visit had affected them, or what they deeply related to.[113] I thought that combining survivors' experiences of sharing with visitors' experiences of viewing could be very powerful.

The rooms are labeled on the floor plan with the title in the middle, and the themes included on either side. Display walls at the back of each room will be labeled with the title, as well as exhibiting more information. These walls are open on each side to allow visitors to pass into the next room. Within the room layouts, included third in *Appendix C*, spaces are included for where displays could potentially be placed. Currently the floor plan is very open and could hold other standing displays. The only other structures in each room layout are the interactive elements of the exhibit, and the "Wall of Remembrance".

Almost self-explanatory, the "Wall of Remembrance" is intended to feature plaques with the names of Deaf Jews who perished. This would also include blank plaques for individuals whose names were unknown. I must credit this idea to the Ahlem memorial, which included many blank spaces and plaques to represent those who they new of, but did not know by name.

C) Summary of Interactive Elements:

These elements are colored blue on the floor plan, and labeled by letter. Letter A is the appel section. Appels are a familiar part of most survivors' experience of the labor or concentration camps. The term refers to lengthy role calls that were often conducted in terrible conditions and forced weakened prisoners to stand for hours. While this procedure was hard for every prisoner, it was an experience of pure terror for a Deaf prisoner. As already noted, deafness was almost always a death sentence in the camps. Not responding to one's name in a

[113] Henderson and Kaeppler, 20.

roll call was either a sign of defiance, or the revelation of disability; either resulted in almost certain death.[114] Consequently, Deaf Jews were forced to rely on others to indicate that their name had been called. Many survivors recount this practice, including Doris Fedrid: "People would tug on me so I knew *when my name was called. They'd pull on my sleeve and I'd know."[115] This interactive section would recreate that process. Visitors would be given numbers at the door; those with noise cancelling headphones would rely on visitors without them to indicate when their number was called. Though the visitors would not feel a fraction of the terror the prisoners felt, this would hopefully help them empathize with the prisoners' experience.

Interactive element B is a representation of one survivor's many different hiding places. Besides just including this recreation, the area would feature information about Doris Fedrid, and the many different places her father hid her before she, and her family, were eventually taken to the Janowska labor camp.[116] The particular hiding place that would be recreated is described in depth in Fedrid's testimony in *Appendix B, Doris Fedrid, Resourcefulness/Independence.* Essentially Fedrid hid within the wall of a bathroom, she had to stay there all day in pitch-blackness with no food, water, or access to a toilet. Though Fedrid is Deaf, she recounted that she "could feel sound, people, searching, pounding and stomping."[117] To attempt to recreate this experience, visitors would be able to stand behind a wall, with the option of wearing noise-cancelling headphones, and if they chose, feel a docent bang on the door. Though this would be a more open set up, and not truly comparable to Fedrid's experience, it is again, an attempt to allow the visitor to empathize with the survivor.

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[114] *Appendix B, Doris Fedrid, Reliance on Others*
*Areas of highlighted text are used to indicate parts of long quotes which hold greatest significance to theme.
[115] *Appendix B, Doris Fedrid, Reliance on Others*
[116] Durr, 524.
[117] *Appendix B, Doris Fedrid, Resourcefulness/Independence*

Next comes interactive element C, that attempts to recreate a survivor's experience of escape. Ingelore Honigstein attempted to obtain passports from the American Consulate in Germany with her parents, only to be pulled into a separate room and given a hearing test. The man administering the test ordered her to turn around and repeat words that he spoke behind her; she was forced to turn so that she could not see his lips and would have to rely on her hearing. Fortunately for Honigstein she was able to see his face in the reflection of a glass-covered picture in front of her. She successfully read his lips and was granted a passport.[118] To replicate this experience I would have visitors stand in front of a glass covered picture and attempt to read the lips of the reflection of docents behind them. Like the interactive element featuring Fedrid, this area would contain more information about Honigstein, and others like her who faced similar trials. I would ensure that guests learned about Honigstein's full story before participating in the activity, in the hopes that this would convey the severity of this trial. Though this will not be a matter of life and death for the museumgoers, like it was for Honigstein, hopefully it can help them understand the intensity of this trial.

Finally, interactive element D is not specific to a single survivor. Instead it attempts to pool and relate the stories of many identified Deaf Jews who experienced the Holocaust. This would be done in the form of a map illustrating connections between the individuals. Some examples include; several Deaf and Deaf Jewish schools many of the individuals attended, marriages between several different survivors, and even a single Manhattan English class led by a teacher from Gallaudet University, which several survivors attended.[119] Visitors would be able interact with the map, track the paths of certain individuals, and have complete control over

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[118] *Appendix B, Ingelore Honigstein, Resourcefullness/Independence*

[119] Patti, Durr, *Deaf People + World War II,* Accessed September 9, 2016, http://www.rit.edu/ntid/ccs/deafww2/

miniature versions on ipads connected to the area. These ipads would also allow visitors to learn more about specific stories of Deaf Jewish interaction, and the new communities survivors created. As this would be located in the new Deaf communities section, it would be surrounded by additional information about new Deaf and Deaf Jewish communities formed by the displaced survivors. Ideally, all of these interactive elements would distinguish the exhibit from other sources of information on Deaf Jews; such as texts like *Crying Hands* and websites like *Deaf People + WWII.* Therefore, these interactive elements not only contribute to the exhibit, but also help to justify its existence.

5) Conclusion:

A) Conclusion:

I began my studies on this topic by collecting data on individual Deaf Jews and examining testimony. However, to make a conclusion about whether or not Deaf Jews qualify as an intersectionality within Holocaust studies, it is not enough to simply examine this data. It is especially not enough when the intension of the research is not only to prove the thesis statement, but also to create a design document for an exhibit on the material. To do this effectively I had to examine existing literature on intersectionality, collective and cultural memory, oral history, the Holocaust, the United States Holocaust Museum, controversial exhibits, Deaf people in the Holocaust, and finally, why researching Deaf Jews of Holocaust is important.

After examining all of this literature, I was able to apply it directly to my own research. Based on the published research I studied I am able to conclude that the unique experiences of Deaf Jews during the Holocaust qualifies them as an intersectionality during this period. This conclusion is founded in many things. First, evidence provided by testimony to support the themes I developed; the literature supporting the validity of oral history, which justified this testimony; and the research on intersectionality, which established that Deaf Jews could be represented by the term. It was also supported by the justification for representation of all groups found in Novick, Linenthal, and Henderson and Kaeppler; and finally, the dedicated work of Ryan and Schuchman, Biesold, and Durr, which justified Deaf Jews as a group with a unique experience and worth studying. Lastly, it goes without saying that all of this research was essential to fill, formulate, and create the design document for this exhibit.

B) Call for Future Research:

i) Areas for Future Research

Perhaps the most obvious area for possible future research is the identification of more Deaf Jewish individuals. A clear source for this process would be records of enrollment at the few Deaf Jewish schools in existence. Additional research on the schools themselves would also be a great opportunity, especially to contribute to the section on old Deaf communities. Though records of Deaf Jews in the Holocaust are very limited, there is still great opportunity for further research on this topic. One area that this essay does not touch on is that of gender. Though I did not write about the differences in experience between the genders, I did notice several examples of this when examining testimony and even some already published material. The examination of Deaf Jewish women would be an intersectionality within that of Deaf Jews, and it is truly a topic worth examination.

ii) Areas for Future Development of the Exhibit

There is also great opportunity for future development of the exhibit. Firstly, the design document included in this paper is very limited. It does not include displays, captions or artifacts. Though I was able to identify a multitude of artifacts that could have been included within the archives of the United States Holocaust Museum, and several other sources, I simply did not have the time or resources to create a full design document including this material. Second, a full analysis of every testimony referenced in *Appendix A-ii* could add an incredible amount of testimony to the themes displayed in the museum. This analysis would also create more additions to the map, lead researchers to more artifacts, and grow the amount of information held in the exhibit exponentially.

6) <u>Appendices:</u>

A) <u>Identified Deaf Jew and Testimony and Tables:</u>

i. *Identified Deaf Jews:*

Last:	First:	Last:	First:	Last:	First:
Bardos	Lazlo	Feld	Max	Ratner	Eva
Bardos	Magda Zimmet	Feld	Rose	Ratner	Isadore
Bergman	Eugene	Florsheim	Henry	Ratner Shirey	Lily
Bergman	Gene	Friedman	Lotte	Rosman	Rose
Bergman	Brian	H.	Bertha	Rubin	Miriam
Bloch	David	Heilman	Anna	Schertz	Joseph
Czempin	Hans	Heilman	Joshua	Schlessinger Intrator,	Marion
Czempin	Wolfgang	Honigstein	Ingalore	Schweizer	Hans
DeJong	Elizabeth	Klein	Miklos	Schweizer	Irene
Dunai	Harry	Konig	Judit	Shemesh	Zila
Ehrenfeld	Franz	Landman	Esther	Spielman	Moshe Aron
Erdosi	Klara	Lazaar	Perl	Stern	Ruth Oppenheimer
F.	Henry	Lobenberger	Edith Frank	Stiefel	Herbert
F.	Lore	M.	Herta	Teger	Stanley
F.	Morris	M.	Nelly	Wajcbulm	Esther
F.	William	N.	Meta	Wajcbulm	Hanka
Farago	Peter	Nathans	Anita	Wierner	Richard
Fedrid	Doris	Paschkaurer	Hanz	Wurmfeld	Frida
Fedrid	Fred	Rattner	Hilda	Wurmfeld	Ludwig
Bardos	Lazlo	Ratner	Nelly		

ii. *Oral Histories:*

Last Name:	First Name:	Testimony with:	Testimony Type:	Transcript Access:
Fedrid	Doris	NTID	Film (ASL)	USHMM
Honigstein	Ingelore	NTID	Film (ASL)	USHMM
Ratner Shirey	Lily	NTID	Film (ASL)	USHMM
Teger	Stanley	NTID	Film (ASL)	UNAVAILABLE
Dehalt	Anita	NTID	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
Wurmfeld	Frida	NTID	Film (ASL)	UNAVAILABLE
Bardos	Lazlo	NTID (NJ Conference)	Film (ASL)	UNAVAILABLE
Bardos	Magda Zimmet	NTID (NJ Conference)	Film (ASL)	UNAVAILABLE
Wurmfeld	Ludwig	NTID (NJ Conference)	Film (ASL)	UNAVAILABLE
Bloch	David	NTID + USC Shoah	Film (ASL)	UNAVAILABLE
Bergman	Eugene	USC Shoah	Film (ASL)	Unavailable
Rosman	Rose	USC Shoah	Film (ASL)	Unavailable
Rubin	Miriam	USC Shoah	Film (ASL)	Unavailable
Ehrenfeld	Franz	Yad Vashem	Film (ASL)	Unavailable
Lazaar	Perl	Yad Vashem	Film (ASL)	Unavailable
Lobenberger	Edith Frank	Yad Vashem	Film (ASL)	Unavailable
Shemesh	Zila	Yad Vashem	Film (ASL)	Unavailable
B.	David	Yale	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
F.	Henry	Yale	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
F.	Lore	Yale	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
F.	Morris	Yale	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
F.	William	Yale	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
H.	Bertha	Yale	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
M.	Herta	Yale	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
M.	Nelly	Yale	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
N.	Meta	Yale	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
R.	Hilda	Yale	Film (ASL)	Patricia Durr
Bergman	Gene	USHMM	Audio	
Bergman	Brian	USHMM	Audio (Brian Bergman speaks)	
Czempin	Hans	USHMM	Audio (GSL to German to English)	
Czempin	Wolfgang	USHMM	Audio (GSL to German to English)	

B) Examples of Testimony Analysis:*

FEDRID, DORIS

Birth: June 26, 1927 Tarnopol, Poland
Death: May 17, 2014
Family:
Connections:
Other Resources:

- Photo of English Class: http://bit.ly/2id9BR1
- Transcript: http://bit.ly/2iafvr8

Summary: Time before war, work in ghetto, birth of sister, hiding places, slave labor camp, escape, 8 mo. in hiding, living under Russian control, travel to US

Isolation:

Communication:

- Some times I'd ask my mother, 'I notice when the woman opens the door you two are talking – what about?' so my mother would etch it out on my arm to tell me the news." (interviewer: make lines on your arm?) "Yes, she would write the outline of letters into my hand. This is how she would tell me the news. This is how I got information, of course it was Polish writing, which I know. Sometimes she would do it on my back – the same method." (19:49-20:20)

Confusion:

Dual Persecution:

- "We had armbands" (interviewer: describe them and the color) "They had a star of David on them. It was made of two triangles." (interviewer: yes and what color?) "White with yellow and blue. Some people would take off their armbands to sneak out and sell goods – dealing on the black market you know. This was a way to get money or goods secretly." (2:60-3:23)*
- "My grandmother did take care of her until 1943 when my mother asked a woman to take care of my sister. The woman accepted and cared for her for a few months but in June she changed her mind. My sister was so quiet (because she was Deaf) that the woman thought she was worthless and put her out on the street. A boy was skating and heard my sister crying. It was raining at the time. He called over an officer, a Nazi policeman. When he saw my sister, he thought what lovely beautiful little girl and wrapped her up in his coat and brought her to a Catholic orphanage run by nuns and left her there." (6:25- 7:26)*

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*Areas of highlighted text are used to indicate parts of long quotes which hold greatest significance to theme. This is used when the entire quote had to be included for context, but the context does not directly apply to the theme.

Reliance on Others:

- (appels) “It was frightening. It was a bad idea to be in the front. I was always in the back, last. There were rows of five. Lines upon lines. Men [120]and women were in different formations. There were no children at all. NONE. People would tug on me so I knew [*]when my name was called. They’d pull on my sleeve and I’d know. Different women would help me when my mother happened to be somewhere else. They all knew and I stayed quiet. They helped me. It was wonderful.” (14:35-15:00)
- “Again, I noticed my mother heard things and went to the window so I went to look with her and we saw people running into a building to hide. Thye had planned it. I knew there were about 500 people in here. I thought, ‘mom maybe we should join them.’ She replied, ‘no, no.’ she had been told that they would come and drop down gas in a pipe. I had thought it was for ventilation but really they planned to drop it down a gas canister and then seal it off so that all inside died.” (15:55-16:30)
- “Here and there they kept selecting people – witling us down to almost nothing until the last day in the camp – July 22. We had heard a rumor and after work duty we returned home and saw people looking so sad standing around and there was a full appel, all the names were read off the list and when they said the name for me, someone tugged on my pants and I raised my hand and played calm. At night in secret some people cut the fence and decided to escape. Some stood up and were shot. You really had to crawl. At the fence with other people, the man in front cut the fence then I was behind my father and held onto the back of his shirt. When my father jumped, I jumped and squirmed after him. My mother did the same with Sylvia and I was last. It happened there was a person behind me who was pulling on me and I had to shake him off to get away. I heard some people when they got up and were signaled not to – it was too late. They would be shot. Luckily we exited in the other direction. Our side was better. Their side was no good.” (16:55-18:20)

:

Finding New Deaf Communities:

- Deaf English class in Manhattan

Old Deaf Community/Absence of:

Sharing Experiences:

- (9:10-10:00) Use of paper
- showed how she held onto father
- (20:00) Demonstrates mother’s transmission of information

Resiliency/Hardihood:

- “Here and there they kept selecting people – witling us down to almost nothing until the last day in the camp – July 22. We had heard a rumor and after work duty we returned

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*Areas of highlighted text are used to indicate parts of long quotes which hold greatest significance to theme.

home and saw people looking so sad standing around and there was a full appel, all the names were read off the list and when they said the name for me, someone tugged on my pants and I raised my hand and played calm. At night in secret some people cut the fence and decided to escape. Some stood up and were shot. You really had to crawl. At the fence with other people, the man in front cut the fence then I was behind my father and held onto the back of his shirt. When my father jumped, I jumped and squirmed after him. My mother did the same with Sylvia and I was last. It happened there was a person behind me hwo was pulling on me and I had to shake him off to get away. I heard some people when they got up and were signaled not to – it was too late. They would be shot. Luckily we exited in the other direction. Our side was better. Their side was no good." (16:55-18:20)

- "You know a woman's period. What do you think we did during this time- my mother and I? we would take the sacks you know s-" (interviewer: sacks) "yes, like you get potatoes in a sack from the store. We would take these sacks and cut them into strips and save them and wash them and lay them out to dry. We'd wash them in cold water the woman would bring us at night and we'd wash these sack strips after use and lay them out to dry. It was fine. No problem. We had no cotton or cloth to use, just these sacks which we had to save up and reuse. We'd have the strips, lay them out, roll them up. This went on for 8 months. We had to put up with this until we were safe." (19:00-19:45)

Resourcefulness/Independence:

- "I told my father go and hide. He knew from the past that they would come through and gather up the men to work and those who were too lazy were killed. My father didn't want to work for them so he ran away to hide. My grandfather said, 'ah I'll stay put.' It was too late. So he hugged me. My grandfather said 'no' so they shot him. Me, I escaped. I saw the first shot and as I ran I heard a and felt a total of six shots." (1:56-2:30).
- "There was a wall of a bathroom, when the door opened it would over a board. You had to enter by scooting into it on your back. It wasn't a good spot. I only hid there once. It was very uncomfortable and hard to get out of. I had to sit tight in there." (interviewer: all day?) "Yes, all day. It was pitch dark in there. There was absolutely NO light." (interviewer: food?) "NOTHING. NOTHING" (interviewer: toilet?) "NONE. All I could do was be still, quiet and sleep. I just sat and was quiet. I could feel sound, people searching, pounding and stomping. I felt this bang, bang, bang. I was very scared! I will never forget this. Them searching. It was so exhausting. The banging on the doors – *Goodness!" (9:10-10:13)

HONIGSTEIN, INGELORE (HERZ)

Birth: October 27, 1924 Rastatt, Germany
Death:
Family:
Connections: LEXINGTON (15)

**Areas of highlighted text are used to indicate parts of long quotes which hold greatest significance to theme.

Other Resources:
Summary: deaf child of hearing adults, lived with speech therapist, sent to deaf school, forced out because of anti-Semitism, returned home, father escapes Dachau, sent to Jewish Deaf school in Berlin, raped by Nazi youth, escape to the US, Lexington, discovery of pregnancy,

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Isolation:

- "The doctor did indeed confirm that I was deaf. I could not speak. I could not yell or scream. I could not make any sounds at all. I was lonesome. I lived in a very small town." (

Communication:

- "my teacher hit me very hard on and I let out a scream, 'Ah.' He said, 'yes, that is the letter 'A.'' it is as if something in my mind woke up when that happened. I wanted to learn more." "The process took about two or three years, I cannot remember exactly. Finally I was able to speak in sentences pretty well, after a couple years, but I learned nothing educationally during this time. What words meant or concepts behind them were not taught to me at all. All the energy was put into helping me with vocal production."

Confusion:

-

Dual Persecution:

- "Jews were not allowed to sit on the park benches. Nobody was allowed to go into museums. Jewish people were not allowed to go to the movies and I did see the signs prohibiting these activities. I saw those signs all around."
- (at the Heidelberg school for the deaf) "It was mixed. However, I was the only Jew on the premises at the time. I was there from the ages of 10 until somewhere between 13 and 14. At that time, I was curious of the behavior of my classmates. They began spitting on me and pulling my hair and I wondered why they were doing this to me. Why were they hurting me? I had never done anything against them. I was always nice to them so why were they torturing me. No one would give me an answer.
  I went to the director of the school to ask him. His name was Dr. Singer. I said, 'can you tell me why they are pulling my hair when I am always so nice to my classmates?' Dr. Singer told me, 'you better just go home." They brought all my clothes and all of my possessions down and they were going to send me home, but I said, 'I have not finished school yet.' 'Sorry,' he said, 'you have to go home.' I was shocked. I could not understand why this would be happening to me."
- "In my hometown I was the only one who was deaf so in a small town everyone knew me. Everybody knew I was Jewish. Everybody knew my father had a hardware business. *We were known all over this small town in which we lived. I was spit on. Stones were thrown at me. I just had to keep my cool, I could not fight back. I had to keep my cool and take the blows as they came."
- "I had a great uncle who was living in Atlanta, Georgia at the time. He is the one in the family that helped everyone else get out of Germany. My parents could have left in 1937,

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* * Areas of highlighted text are used to indicate parts of long quotes which hold greatest significance to theme.

but I was not able to go with them if they had made the choice to go. The priority was not high enough for me to be given a visa because I was deaf and so that is what happened and we were the last to leave."

- "We went to the consulate and my parents wanted to be with me when I went into the office, but the person who was in charge of the consulate office would not allow them to accompany me. He shooed them away and I had to go in alone into this office with him. I said, 'I would be so very, very proud to be an American. I want to go to school. I want to learn how to speak English. I want to loam some sort of vocational trade. I have not been able to finish school.' He tapped my on the shoulder and he said, 'Turn around. I want to give you a hearing test.' I was terrified. I did not know what I was going to do, but I thought, right, I will try my best.

  I could hear some sounds, but I was not ever able to discern words. I turned around and somehow God was with me that day. What happened was, on the wall that I was facing was a beautiful picture with a glass pane over it and this picture reflected the light as if it were a mirror. I could actually look at the reflection in this picture and I was able to lip-read what the man behind me was saying. I tried so hard to catch every word that he uttered. I turned to him and I acted dumb, like I had not been able to use this reflection, and I tried to say, 'Please, please, don't do this to me. Let me be an American.' He said, 'Just one more word, I want you to hear just one more word.' Quietly, I tried to control myself as I looked back into that picture again and I turned to him and I said, 'I believe you said something' and then I told him the word I thought he had said. He did not even say anything more to me. He became very business-like and he wrote something on a paper and then I had to sign. I do not even know what I was signing to.

  When we were done, he took me out to see my parents. My parents had been waiting for me and wondering what had happened and they asked me, 'did something get written down?' and I said, 'yes' and they said, 'fantastic! You have received your visa. You have got a passport now. You have it.' Really! I had no idea what was going on, but we were overjoyed."

- "We got to the United States on February 22, 1940, Washington's Birthday. Now the ship docked and my mother started to disembark from the ship, but somebody pushed me back and separated me from my parents. I said, 'my mother's going down there,' but they kept *me back because I was deaf. I started crying. I cried so hard that they thought I had the chickenpox because I had developed hives all over my face. I was a very heavy crier. I gave up after awhile and sat down on the floor. I cried so hard, I cried myself to sleep and as I slept these modeling red blotches on my face went away. Somebody noticed that they had gone away and realized I was not sick, which was good because they would have sent me to Ellis Island. Once they ascertained that I was fine, they let me get off the boat and I could go to my new home in America."

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Reliance on Others:

Finding New Deaf Communities:

- “We went to my cousin's house. They said that we could stay there until we found jobs. They took me to the ‘HIAS.’ This is an organization that was for people to find employment. You would fill out applications and they would try to find a place for you. As for me, they helped me find the Lexington School for the Deaf. I had a room to sleep in. I had food, everything was provided for me there. I was 15 at the time. It was great.”
- “‘Well, what did you come here for today?’ I said, he had come to pick up your cousin, whose name was Edith and Edith was hearing. They had known each other because they were from the same hometown in Germany. A lot of people from the same area in Germany were living in this one particular neighborhood. Anyway, he had come to take Edith out on a date. I said, ‘what are you going to be doing this afternoon on this date?’ ‘Well, we are going to the theatre?’ ‘The theatre’, I said, ‘oh it is going to be singing and you cannot even hear it. why are you going to go with her for? I do not think she is the one for you. I think it would be better if you and I dated. Don't you think I would be better for you? Come on, darling. Don't you think I would be more your type?’ We started dating.”

Old Deaf Community/Absence of:

- “Herbert Stiefel. Herbert was in Berlin, I mean Germany too. He was from Weinheim. He was president of a Jewish Deaf Club that was located in Frankfort. On Main, it was on Main.
  He sent a flyer to all of the deaf Jewish people telling them to come to a very important meeting. He wanted to make an incredibly important announcement to them this one particular time. He had a best friend named Fritz Herbst. This was his best friend, very tight pals. Fritz was not Jewish, but Fritz had warned Herbert He said, ‘you must leave Germany immediately. You have got to gat out as soon as possible.’ He said, ‘I have heard plans. I have heard things that are going on and you have got to gel out of here. Any friends or relatives you have In America or England or Israel, please get hold of them and leave now.’
  Herb made this announcement to all of the deaf people who were members of the Deaf Club. They said, ‘why, what about our jobs? What about our money, our savings?’ Herb said, ‘I have the same problems. In America we can get money, we can get jobs, but we need to leave. Germany is no more for us.’ This is what he announced to all the members of the Deaf Club, and then he said, ‘some day, all of us here will see each other again.’ Those were the last words that he announced to the Deaf Club of which he was the president.”
- “One woman came up to me and asked me where I was from. I said, ‘I was from New York, but then I had moved to Florida.’ She said, ‘what is your name?’ I told her my full name and I used Stiefel as my last name, ‘Ingelore Stiefel.’ She said, ‘Herbert Stiefel’ I said,‘yes, that is my husband.’ She said, ‘you know Herbert Stiefel?’ ‘Yes, that was my husband.’ Your husband — she hugged me and started kissing me all up and down my arms and all over my face and I had no idea why. She said, ‘I will never forget Herbert was president of the Jewish Club in Germany and he was the one who warned all of us about getting out of Germany.’ The lest words he said to us are that ‘we will all see each

other some day, somewhere, again.' She was the one to see me and remind me and tell of the last words that Herbert had said to them, I will never forget that"

Sharing Experiences:

- I spoke for the first time about this in Washington, D.C. It was a Deaf Jewish Convention. I believe it was 1992. I was on a panel discussion where people were telling their stories about what had happened to them. They were all survivors. I was listening to everybody and Ruth Stern was sitting next to me and poked me in my side and said, 'get up. You tell your story, tell them what happened, please.' I said, 'no, no, no.' She said, 'well everybody's got something similar. Tell your story too.' She finally got up and pointed at me so that everybody would look at me and she made me get up. Of course I had to stand and all eyes were upon me. I had to stand, In the middle of this forum, and I did not even know where to begin. I told them my name. I told them what had happened to me and as I told the story and kept going on and on, it was just a torrent of information. I looked in the audience and everyone was crying. Everyone was crying as they looked at me. After that, I felt so much better. I felt I had finally gotten it off my chest; somehow a weight had been lifted off of me. I felt so much lighter and I have to give thanks to Ruth for that

Resiliency/Hardihood:

- "In my hometown I was the only one who was deaf so in a small town everyone knew me. Everybody knew I was Jewish. Everybody knew my father had a hardware business. We were known all over this small town in which we lived. I was spit on. Stones were thrown at me. I just had to keep my cool, I could not fight back. I had to keep my cool *and take the blows as they came."
- All of the passengers were required to wear life jackets. We had to, it was terrifying. It might seem funny, but I stood on the side of the boat and I tried to blow the mines away from the ship. I just blew as hard as I could hoping that I could blow them away. Everybody else went downstairs, but I stood at the deck and watched these mines. Finally, I went downstairs too.

-no one else eating, ate with sailors

Resourcefulness/Independence: (22:00-24:20)

- "We went to the consulate and my parents wanted to be with me when I went into the office, but the person who was in charge of the consulate office would not allow them to accompany me. He shooed them away and I had to go in alone into this office with him. I said, 'I would be so very, very proud to be an American. I want to go to school. I want to learn how to speak English. I want to learn some sort of vocational trade. I have not been able to finish school.' He tapped my on the shoulder and he said, 'Turn around. I want to give you a hearing test.' I was terrified. I did not know what I was going to do, but I thought, right, I will try my best.
  I could hear some sounds, but I was not ever able to discern words. I turned around and somehow God was with me that day. What happened was, on the wall that I was facing

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When we were done, he took me out to see my parents. My parents had been waiting for me and wondering what had happened and they asked me, 'did something get written down?' and I said, 'yes' and they said, 'fantastic! You have received your visa. You have got a passport now. You have it.' Really! I had no idea what was going on, but we were overjoyed."

SHIREY, LILY RATNER

Birth: October 27, 1932
Death:
Family: Hilda (Wiener) Ratner (mother), Richard Wiener (uncle, married Eva), Nelly Ratner (sister), Isadore Ratner (father)
Connections:
Other Resources: Photo of Wiener family
Summary: deep family history, early life, father (deaf children, divorce), flight from Austria, Ellis Island, saved from deportation, Fred Froid (ask Durr),

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Isolation:

- "So, then my grandparents had five children together, the first of whom was an uncle who was hearing and then a second uncle was born who was also hearing. The third was my mother who they found to be deaf and my grandmother had no idea how to cope with this. She was totally overwhelmed and didn't know what to do. Now, remember we are talking about a long time ago. And, my grandmother was from Switzerland. Now, in that country and that time deafness was looked down upon. The deaf people were very isolated and the country folks made fun of them and didn't treat them very well. This was back then and I am hoping that it doesn't happen today as well. But my grandmother didn't know what to do. She was paralyzed with fear at the fact that she had a deaf child. And, it seemed that she really didn't accept my mother very well, but my grandfather did and he seemed to cope very well. Later, my mother found out why this was so. It seems

* * Areas of highlighted text are used to indicate parts of long quotes which hold greatest significance to theme.

that my grandfather had a deaf cousin somewhere in the vicinity and so he had a familiarity with deafness but my grandmother didn't. So, my grandmother somewhat shunned my mother and as my mother grew up, they didn't have a very nurturing, fostering relationship. As I was growing up, when I look back I could see that in their dynamic a little bit. Anyway, a fourth child was born who was also deaf. And, my grandmother seemed to calm down a little bit at the birth of this fourth child and of course, my mother was overjoyed because she finally had somebody to communicate with. And, they were very close, these two deaf siblings."

-

Communication:

- "So, then my grandparents had five children together, the first of whom was an uncle who was hearing and then a second uncle was born who was also hearing. The third was my mother who they found to be deaf and my grandmother had no idea how to cope with this. She was totally overwhelmed and didn't know what to do. Now, remember we are talking about a long time ago. And, my grandmother was from Switzerland. Now, in that country and that time deafness was looked down upon. The deaf people were very isolated and the country folks made fun of them and didn't treat them very well. This was back then and I am hoping that it doesn't happen today as well. But my grandmother didn't know what to do. She was paralyzed with fear at the fact that she had a deaf child. And, it seemed that she really didn't accept my mother very well, but my grandfather did and he seemed to cope very well. Later, my mother found out why this was so. It seems that my grandfather had a deaf cousin somewhere in the vicinity and so he had a familiarity with deafness but my grandmother didn't. So, my grandmother somewhat shunned my mother and as my mother grew up, they didn't have a very nurturing, fostering relationship. As I was growing up, when I look back I could see that in their dynamic a little bit. Anyway, a fourth child was born who was also deaf. And, my grandmother seemed to calm down a little bit at the birth of this fourth child and of course, my mother was overjoyed because she finally had somebody to communicate [*]with. And, they were very close, these two deaf siblings."

Confusion:

Dual Persecution:

- "People started to leave the boat but we were left behind. There was so much paperwork and red tape that we had to get through. So, we started to become concerned as to why we weren't allowed off the boat. My grandmother was given permission to leave. She was hearing and there was no problem with her. But, since we were deaf we had to stay. But, of course, my grandmother decided to stay with us. She had no intention of abandoning us so she decided that she needed to protect us and she would stay behind. So, there we were on the boat and we had to stay overnight. And I was so disappointed. There we were in New York; we couldn't get off this boat. My mother kept saying, 'I don't know why, I don't know why. We just have to wait I am not sure why." The next day we were driven

[*] * Areas of highlighted text are used to indicate parts of long quotes which hold greatest significance to theme.

all over town so that we could catch the ferry. Now, where we docked was a pier, you know I am not exactly sure that it is. I haven't been able to find it. It is somewhere on the east side, the Italian area, I think. But, then we had to go catch this ferry that would take us to Ellis Island. And, there we stayed on Ellis Island for five months. Now, the reason we had to be there so long was because war had broken out and the U.S. wasn't sure if they wanted to take in four deaf people to become welfare cases, because the money was going to the war effort. So, they weren't sure that they wanted to accept us. There were four of us who were deaf and it just seemed like that was just a little too much for them to take in all at once. So, there was a lot of going back and forth and trying to find people who would be able to help us convince the authorities to let us in. There was one woman who was a social worker. Her name was Mrs. Ash. She worked for the New York Society of the Deaf— not the Rochester Society. It was New York City. And, no she was a great woman. She was deaf and she would communicate with us. She would come over to Ellis Island quite frequently and she was advocating for us. She was trying to convince them that we could work. My uncle is a tailor; there is no problem with him being able to find gainful employment; my mother as well. Both of them would be able to work. And, my sister and I would go to school, of course. We were so fortunate that we were able to get a guardian, somebody who decided to sort of sponsor us, you might say, and, look after as. He became our guardian. He happened to have a deaf daughter and his grandson..."

- "And, he told my mother, "Your husband was in one of the deaf groups in one of the concentration camps". And, that news took my mother aback. She just couldn't say much to that statement. She was shocked about that. And, he said, now he was lucky because he and his parents had been in a group of people who didn't sign and draw attention to themselves. And, in the separation process, they were sent to a labor camp because nobody knew that they were deaf. But, in that separation line where they called people, my father was taken out and was sent to a gas chamber and he was definitely sent to the gas chamber because he was in a group of deaf people who were signing and gesturing and obviously, the Nazi's had no interest in maintaining deaf people or handicapped people of any way, shape or form. And, during that separation process he was sent to the gas chamber and he said that it was a definite fact that he was one of them in that group and that he was gone. And, he said that there was no doubt about it. Now, it breaks my heart when I think about it."
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Reliance on Others:

- "So, there was a lot of going back and forth and trying to find people who would be able to help us convince the authorities to let us in. There was one woman who was a social worker. Her name was Mrs. Ash. She worked for the New York Society of the Deaf— not the Rochester Society. It was New York City. And, no she was a great woman. She was deaf and she would communicate with us. She would come over to Ellis Island quite frequently and she was advocating for us. She was trying to convince them that we could work. My uncle is a tailor; there is no problem with him being able to find gainful employment; my mother as well. Both of them would be able to work. And, my sister and I would go to school, of course. We were so fortunate that we were able to get a guardian, somebody who decided to sort of sponsor us, you might say, and, look after as. He became our guardian. He happened to have a deaf daughter and his grandson…"

Heightened Awareness:

Finding New Deaf Communities:

Old Deaf Community/Absence of:

- "So, my grandmother somewhat shunned my mother and as my mother grew up, they didn't have a very nurturing, fostering relationship. As I was growing up, when I look back I could see that in their dynamic a little bit. Anyway, a fourth child was born who was also deaf. And, my grandmother seemed to calm down a little bit at the birth of this fourth child and of course, my mother was overjoyed because she finally had somebody to communicate with. And, they were very close, these two deaf siblings."
- "Well, my childhood seemed to be going along quite well. I had very good time growing up. I went to a school for the deaf." (Interviewer: Where was that?)
  In Austria, of course in Vienna. And I don't know if I am right or not but it seems to me that there were somewhere twelve, thirteen, fourteen different schools for the deaf in Vienna. There was a Jewish school, there was a state school for the deaf, and there was a day school. Just a whole laundry list of the different schools for the deaf. I don't even know what they were all called. But my mother decided to take me to a day school for deaf children and I commuted back and forth everyday to that. I went in, in kindergarten and I stayed until 1938. My sister was in first grade. She was ahead of my by a year, end I remember that pretty well. I don't remember specifies about the school or anything I just know that I went. I remember going to school everyday. I remember being timid. My sister always teased me and said, "oh you always cried everyday when you'd get into school.' But, I was little, you know. I was scared. Anyway, all of that came to a halt because of course, you know what happened. I explained that previously and that when the Nazi occupation happened and when Germany invaded Austria, everything changed overnight, drastically. There were all of these rules, regulations, and edicts. I don't even know what they were called. But, Jewish children no longer had permission to attend schools. So, my education came to a halt in 1938 and until 1940 I didn't go to any school."
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Sharing Experiences:

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- "Well, I think that it is important to preserve our history. And, it is important for people to know that it really did happen. Some people make comments that anger me incredibly. I have been to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. A lot of people go. Have you been? Have you been to the Holocaust Museum in D.C.? Have you? Well, you go all the way to the top and you work your way to the bottom and afterwards sometimes people make the comments that, oh, I don't believe this is true. I don't believe that this really happened. You know, people do say that. It is a very ugly thing for people to think And it infuriates me. Now, as I grew up I never even realized what happened and what the Nazi's did to as many people. I didn't realize that until much later. I look back and I realize that it is an incredible history that we have to preserve. I wish I could tell my mother I am sorry. So many times I look to the heavens and say, 'Mama, I am so sorry,' because people would often ask her, 'how did you come here? Why are you in America?'

And, she would go on these long hurrangs and tell the whole story over and over. I would say, ‘Mom, will you atop it already? It is boring. You are boring everybody to tears.’ And, my mother would say, ‘they are asking me. They want to know. I have to tell them.’ And, now I am not much better. People ask me and here I am going on and on about it too.” (Interviewer: Well, it is a story that lives on through the generations and it will keep going through you.) “Hmm, mmm, it makes me smile. That's it I just hope this history will never repeat.”

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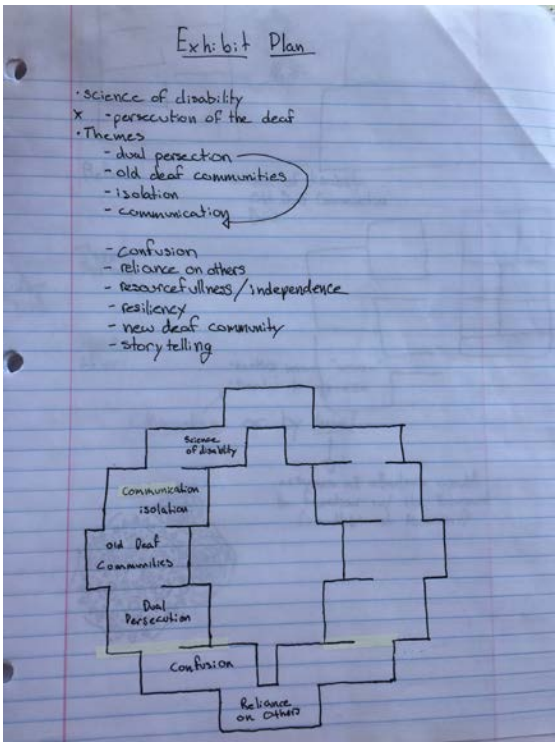
Resiliency/Hardihood:

Resourcefulness/Independence:

C) Design Document:

i) Preliminary Designs:

Draft 1:



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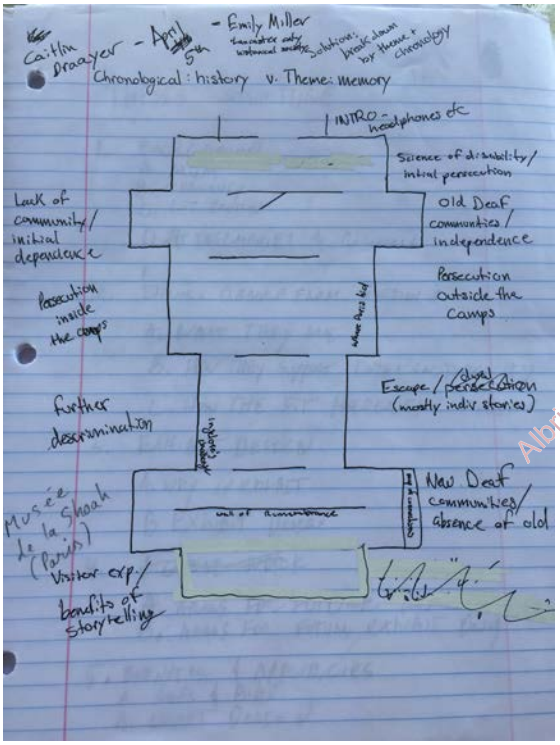
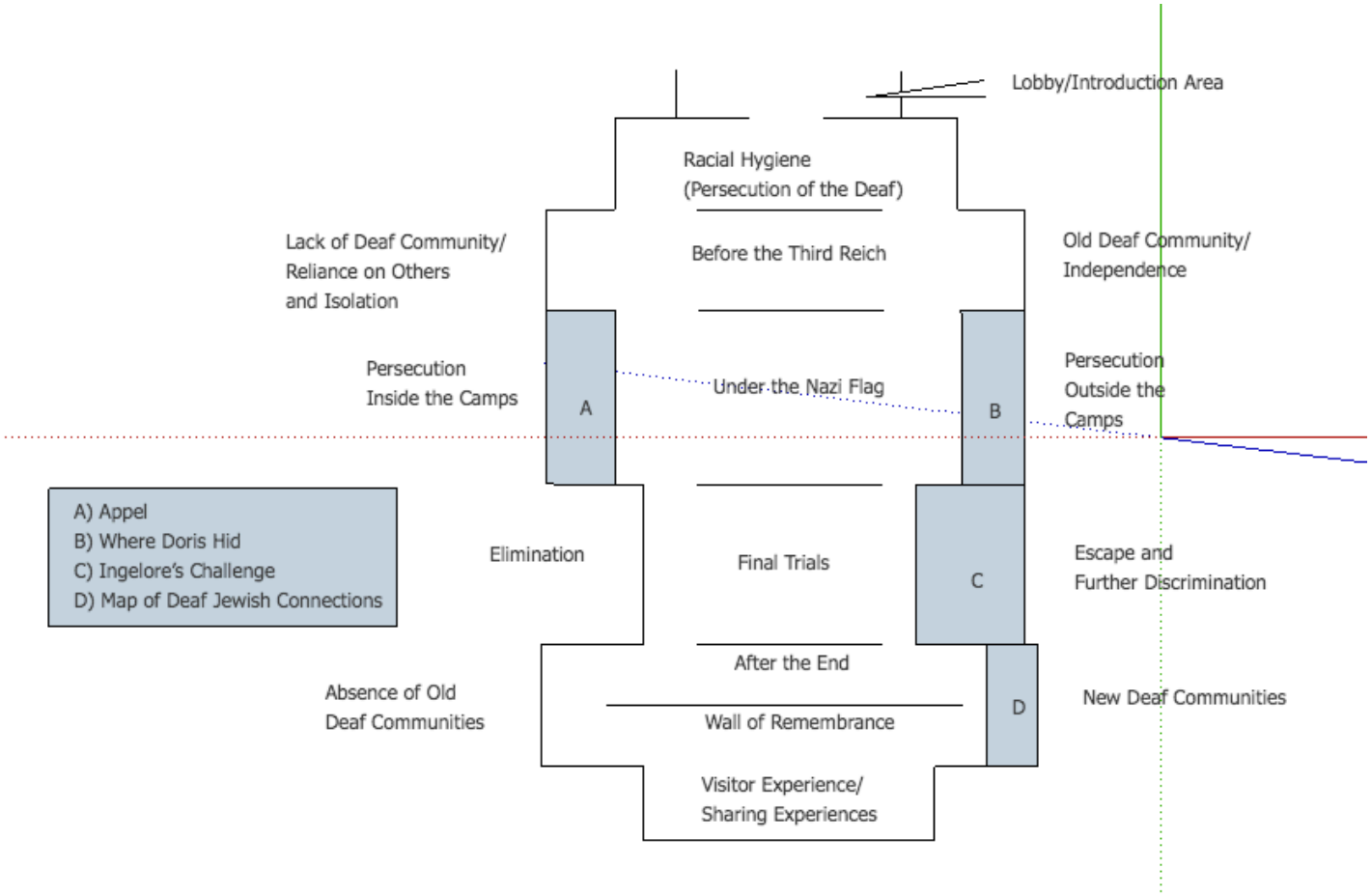
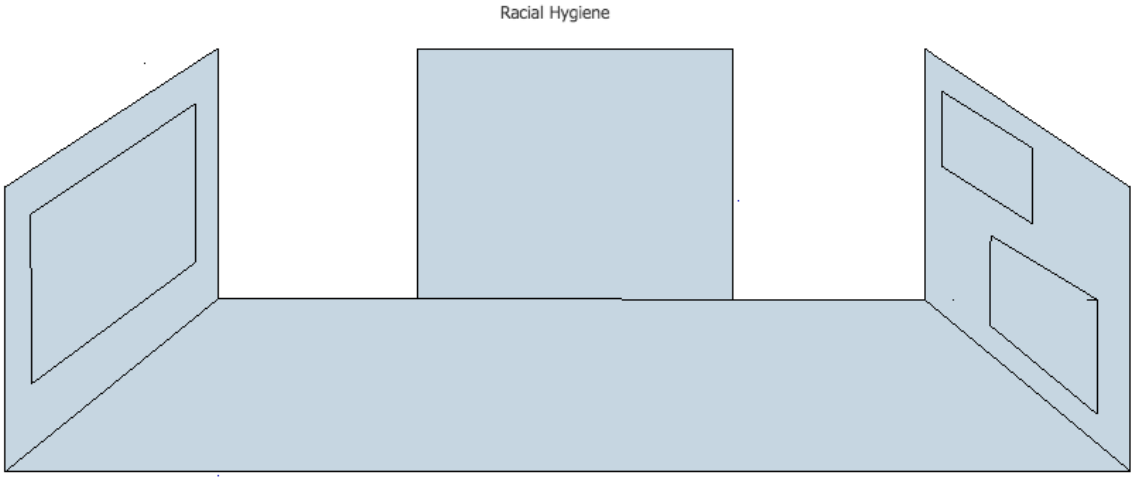
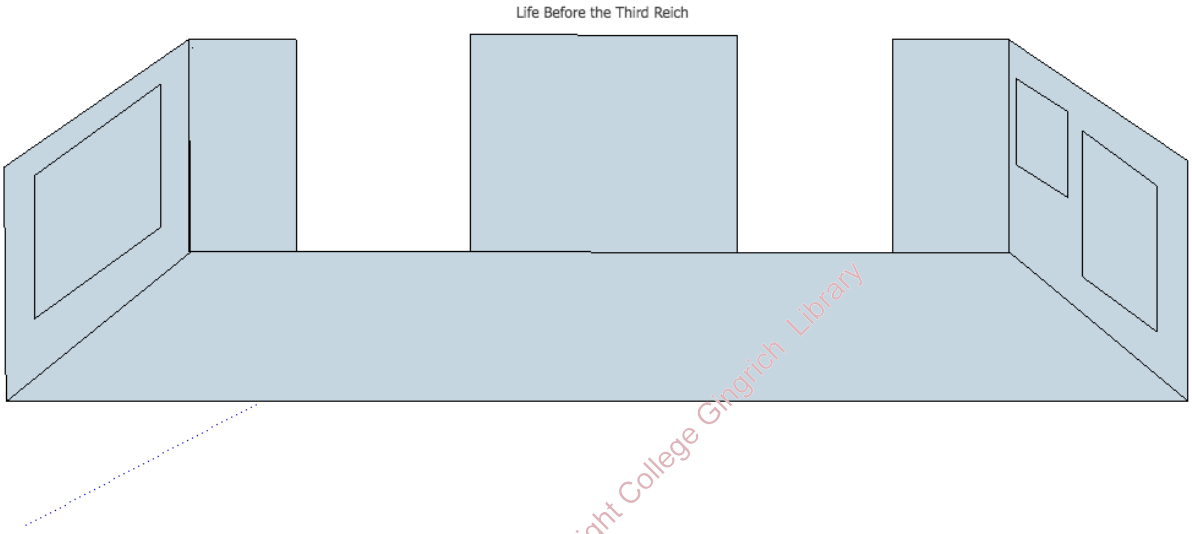


ii) Floor Plan:

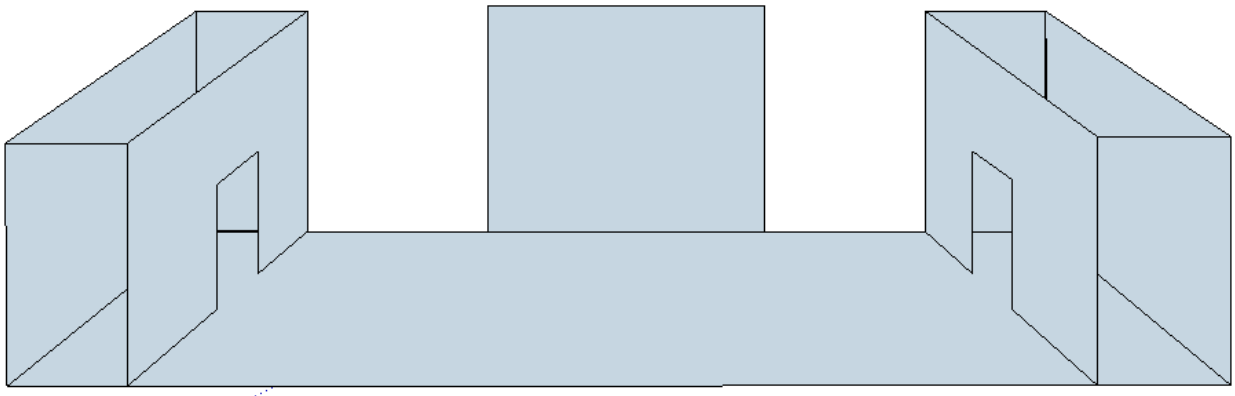


iii) Room Layouts:

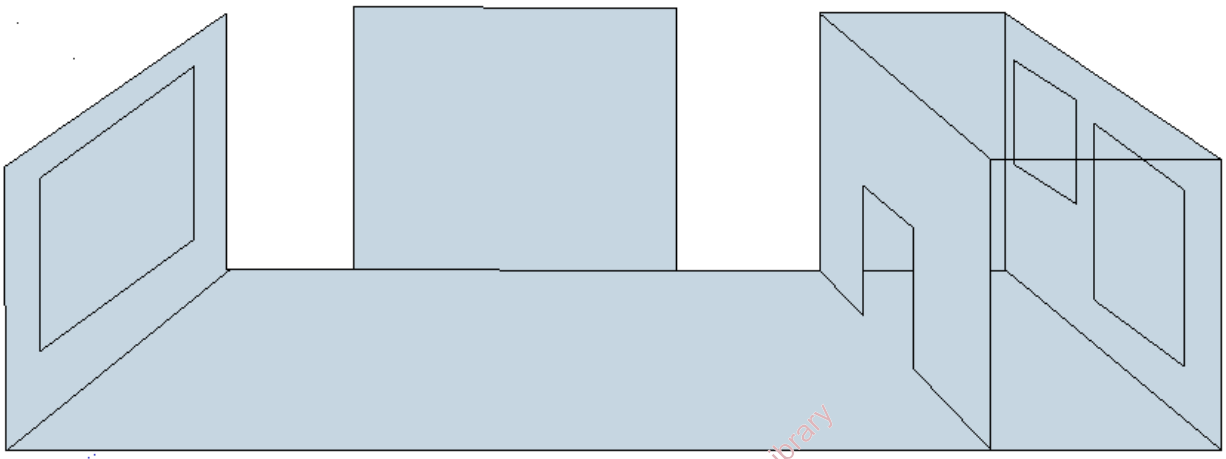


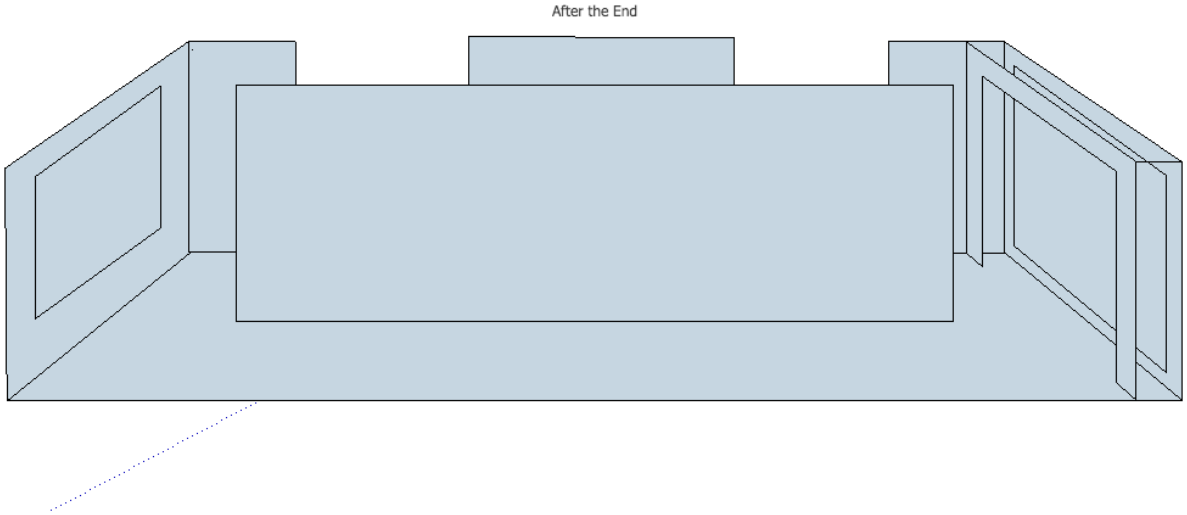


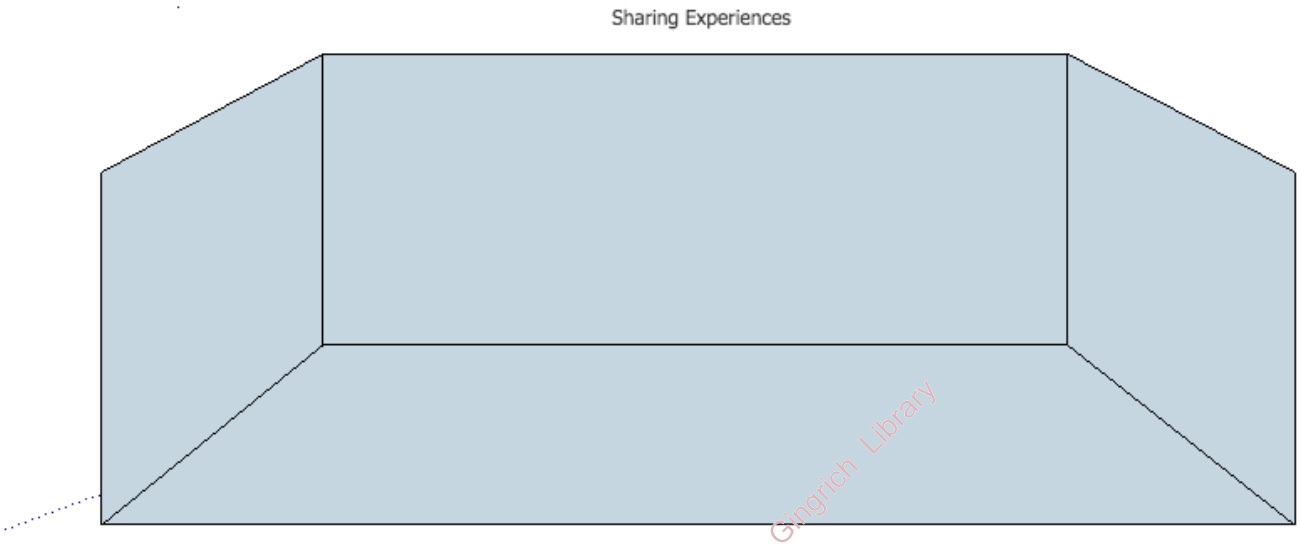
Under the Nazi Flag



Final Trials







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